

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSION

IN RE THE MATTER OF:

KENNETH L. EASTERLING, DISTRICT COURT JUDGE
16TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

AGREED ORDER OF PUBLIC REPRIMAND

Kenneth L. Easterling is a District Court Judge for Kentucky's 16th Judicial District consisting of Kenton County. Judge Easterling has waived formal proceedings and has agreed to the disposition made in this Order.

The Commission received information during a preliminary investigation that on April 30, 2015, Judge Easterling held a preliminary hearing in a case styled as *Commonwealth v. Washington*, Kenton District Court, Docket No. 15-F-00571. Following the presentation of testimony, Judge Easterling directed several comments and questions towards an investigator of the Kentucky Attorney General's Office in a hostile and confrontational tone. During the hearing he scolded the investigator for not consulting Judge Easterling or the Commonwealth Attorney in Kenton County in the investigation that led to the arrest and not obtaining a search warrant in Kenton County. Judge Easterling further accused the investigator of making disparaging remarks towards Judge Easterling and the Commonwealth Attorney in a phone call to a Kenton County Pretrial Officer. Judge Easterling went on to accuse the Attorney General's Office of "political gamesmanship." When the investigator attempted to respond, Judge Easterling abruptly informed him that he was not allowed to speak.

The Commission concludes that by the conduct described above, Judge Easterling violated SCR 4.300, the Code of Judicial Conduct, Canon 3B(4) which states:

A judge shall be patient, dignified and courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers and others with whom the judge deals in an official capacity, and shall

require similar conduct of lawyers, and of staff, court officials and others subject to the judge's direction and control.

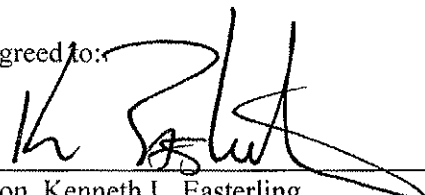
Based on the foregoing conduct, Judge Easterling is hereby publicly reprimanded. In making the disposition in this Order, the Commission duly considered that Judge Easterling fully cooperated in the matter and had no prior sanctions.

Date: December 18, 2015


David Boswell, Acting Chair

Chairman Stephen D. Wolnitzek and Judge Karen Thomas recused themselves from any consideration of this matter.

Agreed to:


Hon. Kenneth L. Easterling