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*"A Public Office is a Public Trust"*

May 21, 2015

Michael A. Etienne, Esquire  
City of North Miami  
111 NE 1<sup>st</sup> Street; Suite 324  
Miami, Florida 33132

CERTIFIED MAIL  
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

**Confidential**

RE: Complaint No. 15-115, In re MICHAEL A. ETIENNE, ESQ.

Dear Mr. Etienne:

The above-captioned complaint, recently received in the office of the Commission on Ethics, is being transmitted to you pursuant to the requirements of Section 112.324, Florida Statutes. This office will forward all future correspondence in this matter to you at the above-listed mailing address unless otherwise notified of a change in your address. This transmittal is a routine administrative requirement which should not be construed as an approval, disapproval, or judgment of the complaint, either as to its terminology or merits.

Please note that this complaint, as well as all of the Commission's proceedings and records relating to the complaint, remain confidential either until you make a written request to the Commission that such records be made public or until the complaint reaches a stage in the Commission's proceedings where it becomes public. Unless we receive a written waiver of confidentiality from you, our office is not free to release any documents or to comment on this complaint to members of the public or the press, so long as the complaint remains in a confidential stage. The Commission's procedures on confidentiality do not govern the actions of the complainant or the respondent.

The following information is submitted to aid you in understanding the review that a complaint may go through under the Commission's rules. The first stage in our complaint process is a determination of whether the allegations of the complaint are legally sufficient, that is, whether they indicate a possible violation of any law over which the Commission has jurisdiction. If the complaint is found not to be legally sufficient, the Commission will order that the complaint be

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dismissed without investigation and all records relating to the complaint will become public at that time.

If the complaint is legally sufficient but pertains solely to allegations of errors or omissions in financial disclosure forms, a determination will be made as to whether the error(s) or omissions(s) are significant to investigate. If the error(s) or omissions(s) are determined to be minor or inconsequential, you will be so notified and will be given 30 days in which to correct the error(s) or omission(s). If the correction is made, the complaint will be dismissed. If no correction is made, the complaint will advance to the next step in the process.

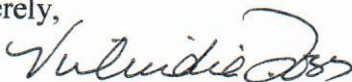
If the complaint is found to be legally sufficient, a preliminary investigation will be undertaken by the investigative staff of the Commission. The next stage of the Commission's proceedings involves the preliminary investigation of the complaint and a decision by the Commission of whether there is probable cause to believe that there has been a violation of any of the ethics laws. If the complaint is investigated, you and the complainant will be given an opportunity to speak with the investigator. You also will be sent a copy of our investigative report prior to any action by the Commission and will be given the opportunity to respond to the report in writing. If the Commission finds that there is no probable cause to believe that there has been a violation of the ethics laws, the complaint will be dismissed and will become public at that time.

If the Commission finds that there is probable cause to believe there has been a violation of the ethics laws, the complaint becomes public and enters the last stage of proceedings, which requires that the Commission decide whether the law actually was violated and, if so, whether a penalty should be recommended. At this stage, you have the right to request a public hearing (trial) at which evidence would be presented, or the Commission may order that such a hearing be held. Public hearings usually are held in or near the area where the alleged violation occurred.

You are entitled to be represented by legal counsel during our proceedings. Upon written request, documents and notices regarding the complaint will be provided to your attorney.

If you are unfamiliar with the ethics laws and the Commission's responsibilities, I encourage you to access our website at [www.ethics.state.fl.us](http://www.ethics.state.fl.us), where you will find publications, rules, and other information. If there are any questions concerning this complaint or the procedures being followed by the Commission, please feel free to contact Ms. Millie Fulford, our Complaint Coordinator, at (850) 488-7864.

Sincerely,



Virindia Doss  
Executive Director

Enclosure

cc: Stephanie Kienzle, Complainant