



TO: Interested Parties  
RE: Governor Palin And Trooper Investigation  
DATE: August 30, 2008

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***“For the record, no one ever said fire Wooten. Not the governor. Not Todd. Not any of the other staff ...” -- Former Public Safety Commissioner Walt Monegan, [Anchorage Daily News](#), 8/30/08***

In the wake of John McCain’s decision to select Governor Sarah Palin as his vice presidential running mate, some in the press are reporting on an inquiry involving the Department of Public Safety commissioner and Governor Palin’s former brother-in-law, a state trooper. The following are the facts of the matter:

- **Governor Palin is an open book on this -- she did nothing wrong and has nothing to hide.** As a reformer and a leader on ethics reform, she has been happy to cooperate fully in the inquiry of this matter.
- **Governor Palin dismissed Public Safety Commissioner Walt Monegan because of an honest disagreement over budget priorities -- that’s it.** Though Governor Palin had differences of opinion over department policy, she valued Monegan’s talents and offered him another position in the administration that was consistent with Monegan’s skill set and that was in an area where the two shared the same policy goals.
- **The allegation that Governor Palin retaliated against Commissioner Monegan for not firing Trooper Wooten is cut from whole cloth -- in fact, it was first made, without any evidence, by a blogger who, as Governor Palin’s opponent in her 2006 gubernatorial race (receiving nine percent of the vote), has blasted the Governor ever since she turned down his request for a government job.**
- **Former Public Safety Commissioner Monegan stated that at no time did Governor Palin, her husband, or anyone on her staff tell him to fire trooper Mike Wooten. Monegan told the *Anchorage Daily News*, “For the record, no one ever said fire Wooten. Not the governor. Not Todd. Not any of the other staff.”** After initially saying he was not certain why he was dismissed, Monegan later said he felt pressured to do something about Wooten, but had no knowledge that pressure was connected with his later dismissal. Gov. Palin stated that she had not pressured Monegan or his Department to fire Wooten, and that she had asked Monegan to take a different position in her administration because she wanted a “new direction” in the Department.
- **The questions related to threats made by Governor Palin’s ex-brother-in-law, state trooper Mike Wooten, arise from a particularly contentious divorce between Wooten and the Governor’s sister, Molly McCann, a dispute that began in 2005 (prior to her becoming Governor).**
- **Mike Wooten, the former husband of Governor Palin’s sister, was a state trooper who made threats against his wife and father-in-law and used a taser against his 10-year old step son.** These threats, which resulted in a court-imposed Domestic Violence Protective Order, included telling others that his wife’s father would “eat a f\*\*\*ing lead bullet” if he helped his daughter get an attorney for the divorce. As a result of these actions, Wooten was suspended from duty with the State Police. In suspending the state trooper, the State Police cited the state trooper’s “serious and concentrated pattern of unacceptable and at times, illegal activity,” and threatened to fire him if his behavior continued. Following this, he issued continuing threats against the Governor and her family. Since his January 2006 divorce from Molly McCann, Wooten (age 35) has married and divorced again -- his fourth divorce.
- **When Sarah Palin was elected Governor in 2006, the Governor’s security detail routinely asked if she was aware of any threats against her or her family, and learned of Wooten’s actions and threats.** Special Agent Bob Cockrell, of the governor’s security detail, instructed that Public Safety Commissioner Monegan be notified about Wooten’s threats on the governor’s father’s life and against the governor because Wooten constituted a security threat. Governor Palin raised the subject with Monegan, and he suggested that it would be better for them not to talk about it, but that her husband, Todd Palin, could contact him about Wooten if necessary. Todd Palin did so, and made follow-up inquiries, as did other members of the Governor’s staff, inquiring about the appropriate Department of Public

Safety procedures for dealing with someone they considered a dangerous person and rogue trooper. Monegan never informed Todd Palin of the disciplinary action against Wooten at the time, and the Governor did not learn of Wooten's suspension until after Monegan had left the Department of Public Safety. The governor did not learn of these contacts by Todd Palin until August of this year.

- **Thereafter, Governor Palin discovered that others in her administration had spoken to Monegan about Wooten, and that there was a recording of one, Frank Bailey, doing so.** Governor Palin was the first to disclose the discovery, publicly releasing a tape of the conversation. She stated that she was unaware of Bailey's actions, that they were "unauthorized" and "wrong" and she suspended him from his duties. Bailey has testified under oath that no one on the governor's staff authorized his inquiry about Wooten, and that he acted on his own initiative because he thought Wooten was a dangerous threat to the security of the governor and her father.
- **The legislature and Attorney General are both currently reviewing the circumstances of Walt Monegan's departure from the Department of Public Safety, and the Governor is fully cooperating with those inquiries.** As an appointee of the Governor, Monegan could legally be removed from office for any reason whatsoever, however, the governor removed Monegan from office for reasons related to their differences over budget policy, not for anything connected to her family.

### **Background Information On Trooper Inquiry**

**In 2005, Sarah Palin Alleged That Her Brother-In-Law, State Trooper Mike Wooten, Threatened Her Family And Had Used A Stun Gun On His 10-Year Old Stepson.** "In 2005, Governor Palin alleged that her brother in-law, Mike Wooten, had threatened to harm her sister and father and had engaged in numerous instances of misconduct, including using a stun gun on his 10-year-old stepson, according to state documents." (Jim Carlton, "Alaska's Palin Faces Probe," *The Wall Street Journal*, 7/31/08)

**An Internal State Police Investigation Confirmed That Wooten Used A Taser On His Stepson, Threatened His Father-In-Law With Violence And Drank Beer In His Patrol Car.** "As the investigation got under way in 2005, Wooten was in the midst of a bitter divorce from Palin's sister, Molly McCann. The couple was fighting over custody of their two young children. Accusations flew from both sides. Troopers eventually investigated 13 issues and found four in which Wooten violated policy or broke the law or both: --Wooten used a Taser on his stepson. --He illegally shot a moose. --He drank beer in his patrol car on one occasion. --He told others his father-in-law would 'eat a f'ing lead bullet' if he helped his daughter get an attorney for the divorce. Beyond the investigation sparked by the family, trooper commanders saw cause to discipline or give written instructions to correct Wooten seven times since he joined the force, according to Grimes' letter to Wooten. Those incidents included: a reprimand in January 2004 for negligent damage to a state vehicle; a January 2005 instruction after being accused of speeding, unsafe lane changes, following too closely and not using turn signals in his state vehicle; a June 2005 instruction regarding personal cell phone calls; an October 2005 suspension from work after getting a speeding ticket; and a November 2005 memo 'to clarify duty hours, tardiness and personal business during duty time.'" (Lisa Demer, "Is Wooten A Good Trooper?" *Anchorage Daily News*, 7/27/08)

**Wooten Was Suspended By State Police, Who Cited His Record Of A "Serious And Concentrated Pattern Of Unacceptable And At Times, Illegal Activity Occurring Over A Lengthy Period, Which Establishes A Course Of Conduct Totally At Odds With The Ethics Of Our Profession."** "The record clearly indicates a serious and concentrated pattern of unacceptable and at times, illegal activity occurring over a lengthy period, which establishes a course of conduct totally at odds with the ethics of our profession,' Col. Julia Grimes, then head of Alaska State Troopers, wrote in March 1, 2006, letter suspending Wooten for 10 days. After the union protested it, the suspension was reduced to five days. She warned that if he messed up again, he'd be fired." (Lisa Demer, "Is Wooten A Good Trooper?" *Anchorage Daily News*, 7/27/08)

**A State Police Investigation Revealed That After Palin's Sister Filed Protective Order Against Wooten, He Was Ordered To Surrender His "Department-Issued Guns, Badge, Credentials And Vehicle During His Off-Duty Time, While The Order Was In Effect."** "The troopers' investigation into Wooten began after Chuck Heath -- Wooten's father-in-law and Palin and McCann's dad -- alerted troopers about a domestic violence protective order McCann had obtained against Wooten on April 11, 2005. McCann filed for divorce the same day, according to the court docket. The trooper had not physically assaulted his wife but intimidated her and threatened to shoot him, Heath told troopers, according to a memo about the complaint. The same day, a concerned neighbor of the couple called troopers with more accusations, including alcohol abuse, based on what Heath and McCann had relayed to him. Wooten seemed 'disconnected' lately, the neighbor said. He told troopers that Heath and McCann were afraid to call troopers themselves. 'Extreme verbal abuse and violent threats and physical intimidation,' McCann wrote in her April 11, 2005, petition to the court. He had driven drunk multiple times, threatened her father, told her to 'put a leash on your sister and family or I'm going to bring them down,' her petition says. A judge issued a 20-day protective order to keep Wooten away. In written orders to Wooten sent the next day, trooper Capt. Matt Leveque echoed the court's directive. Leveque, now a major, also told Wooten to give up

his department-issued guns, badge, credentials and vehicle during his off-duty time, while the order was in effect.” (Lisa Demer, “Is Wooten A Good Trooper?” *Anchorage Daily News*, 7/27/08)

**In July 2007, Palin Dismissed The Department Of Public Safety Commissioner, Walt Monegan, Who Then Complained That Palin Had Pressured Him To Fire Wooten.** “On July 11 of this year, Ms. Palin fired Department of Public Safety Commissioner Walt Monegan. Mr. Monegan then complained that she and her husband had pressured him to fire Mr. Wooten.” (Jim Carlton, “Alaska’s Palin Faces Probe,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 7/31/08)

**Palin Agreed To Cooperate With A Legislative Inquiry Of Monegan’s Departure.** “Ms. Palin, in a statement, denied that, saying she had removed the commissioner she had appointed 18 months earlier because she wanted ‘a new direction.’ She said she will cooperate with the legislative probe, which is expected to be completed by November.” (Jim Carlton, “Alaska’s Palin Faces Probe,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 7/31/08)

**Palin Disclosed That She Had Discovered That Administration Staff Discussed Wooten With The Department Of Public Safety.** “Palin, who has previously said her administration didn’t exert pressure to get rid of trooper Mike Wooten, also disclosed that members of her staff had made about two dozen contacts with public safety officials about the trooper. ‘I do now have to tell Alaskans that such pressure could have been perceived to exist although I have only now become aware of it,’ Palin said.” (Sean Cockerham, “Palin Staff Pushed To Have Trooper Fired,” *Anchorage Daily News*, 8/14/08)

**Palin Suspended Administration Staffer Frank Bailey, Who Said He Made Phone Call On Wooten Without Governor Palin’s Knowledge.** “Gov. Sarah Palin placed the state’s director of boards and commissions on paid administrative leave Tuesday while an investigation continues into whether she abused her power when firing former public safety commissioner Walt Monegan. Frank Bailey was one of several officials who placed a call to the Alaska State Troopers questioning the employment of an officer who went through a messy divorce with Palin’s sister. Monegan has said he felt pressure to fire the trooper, Mike Wooten. Palin denies firing Monegan because he refused to dismiss the trooper. But last week, she acknowledged that at least two dozen calls were made by staff members to Public Safety Department officials questioning Wooten’s employment, including one by Bailey that was retained on tape. ... Bailey has said he made the phone call on his own without knowledge of Palin or her husband, Todd. Nearly a week later after the call was made public, Palin announced her decision to place Bailey on leave.” (Steve Quinn, “Palin Places Bailey On Administrative Leave,” *The Associated Press*, 8/20/08)

**Palin Said Administration Staffer Frank Bailey’s Actions Were “Unauthorized” And “Wrong”:** “His Comments Were Unauthorized As Well As Just Wrong.” “But it was Bailey’s conversation with a trooper, Ketchikan-based Lt. Rodney Dial, that Palin said last week was ‘most disturbing’ and ‘problematic.’ ‘Mr. Bailey seemed to be speaking on my behalf, but Mr. Bailey was not speaking for me,’ Palin said last week. ‘His comments were unauthorized as well as just wrong.’” (Steve Quinn, “Palin Places Bailey On Administrative Leave,” *The Associated Press*, 8/20/08)

**Note: The Head Of Governor Palin’s Security, Special Agent Bob Cockrell, Instructed Todd Palin To Contact Monegan Directly About Any Security Concerns:** “When Made Aware Of The Security Concerns Regarding A State Trooper, I Instructed The First Gentleman To Contact The Commissioner Of Public Safety.” “Monegan has also raised questions about the propriety of the First Gentleman, Todd Palin, meeting with Monegan right after the Governor was elected to discuss security concerns surrounding a state trooper. That meeting occurred following standard questioning of any newly-elected Governor and First Family members regarding security detail concerns. The First Gentleman was specifically told to meet with Monegan by the Governor’s top security detail, Special Agent Bob Cockrell, to forward serious concerns that were substantiated in an internal trooper investigation. The concerns regarding the trooper included: using a Taser stun gun on his stepson, illegally killing a moose and driving with an open container in his patrol car. The First Gentleman also expressed concern over death threats made against a family member by the trooper. ‘When made aware of the security concerns regarding a state trooper, I instructed the First Gentleman to contact the commissioner of Public Safety,’ Cockrell said. ‘It is standard protocol to ask every governor about any threats they perceive or have realized. I will not hesitate to set the record straight in answering these false allegations by former Commissioner Monegan.’” (Governor Sarah Palin, “Palin Responds To Latest Falsehoods Accusations By Former Commissioner,” Press Release, 7/22/08)

**Note: Monegan Said It Was Appropriate For Todd Palin To Contact Him About Any Security Threats.** “The governor raised the issue again in February 2007 during the legislative session in Juneau. ‘As we were walking down the stairs in the capitol building,’ Monegan said, ‘she wanted to talk to me about her former brother-in-law. I said, “Ma’am, I need to keep you at arm’s length with this. I can’t deal about him with you. If need be, I can talk to Todd.’”” (James V. Grimaldi and Kimberly Kindy, “Palin Focus Of Probe In Police Chief’s Firing,” *The Washington Post*, 8/30/08)

**Governor Palin Has Dedicated Her Career To Reform, Taking On Corruption And Passing Ethics Reform**

**“Palin Flies High As Reformer” --Anchorage Daily News, 12/27/07**

**“Palin Signs Ethics Reforms Into Law”** --*The Associated Press*, 7/10/07

**“Rebel Status Has Fueled Front-Runner’s Success: Palin: Her Reputation As A Crusader Has Had Perfect Timing”** --*Anchorage Daily News*, 10/24/06

**“Palin, Croft Call For Expanded Ethics Investigation”** --*The Associated Press*, 12/11/04

**“Palin’s Simply Doing The Right Thing”** --*Anchorage Daily News*, 6/24/07

**“Oil Industry Clout Pushed Back By Palin, Legislators”** --*Anchorage Daily News*, 11/19/07

**“The Joan Of Arc Of Alaska Politics”** --*Anchorage Daily News*, 8/29/08

**“Palin Sends Ethics Bill To House”** --*Anchorage Daily News*, 1/26/07

**“She’s No Good Ol’ Boy”** --*Los Angeles Times*, 8/30/08

**“Bipartisan Duo Seeks Formal Ethics Probe Of Governor, Renkes”** --*Anchorage Daily News*, 12/11/04

**“Palin Recounts Investigation Of Alaska GOP Chairman”** --*The Associated Press*, 9/22/04

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