



**Report of Special Deputy Attorney General
Richard J. Williams**

**Concerning the May 26, 2006 Motor Vehicle Stop
of Hamlet E. Goore**

August 15, 2006

Table of Contents

I.	Preface.....	Page 3
II.	Investigative Findings.....	Page 4
	A. The events relating to the motor vehicle stop of Hamlet E. Goore.....	Page 5
	B. The events relating to the restoration of Hamlet E. Goore's driving privileges	Page 21
	C. The events relating to processing the traffic tickets by the Municipal Court.....	Page 27
III.	Conclusions.....	Page 29
IV.	Staff Biographies	Page 38

I. PREFACE

On July 5, 2006, Stuart Rabner, Chief Counsel to Governor Jon S. Corzine, requested the appointment of an independent person, with law enforcement and prosecutorial authority, for the purpose of investigating and, if warranted, prosecuting any matters arising out of a May 26, 2006, motor vehicle stop of Hamlet E. Goore in the Borough of Fairview, New Jersey. Because of the Attorney General's personal relationship with Mr. Goore, she had recused herself from any involvement with the investigation of the incident.

In his request, Mr. Rabner stated:

Both the public and the Attorney General are entitled to an independent, thorough, and expeditious review of this incident to determine whether the Attorney General sought or received favored treatment, and whether any person involved in this matter violated the law.

On July 6, 2006, pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 52:17B-108, I was appointed as a Special Deputy Attorney General for the purpose of conducting the requested investigation. Thereafter, all members of the Department of Law and Public Safety were recused from the matter with the exception of certain clerical and administrative personnel necessary for ministerial support. Because of that recusal, I became the Acting Attorney General, for the purpose of investigating this matter. Thereafter, I superseded the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office, whose employees similarly were recused.

II. INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS:

An investigative team was assembled consisting of two attorneys acting as special counsel to the investigation and two sworn special investigators. An office was established in a facility under a lease to the State at a location apart from the office of the Department of Law and Public Safety in Trenton. Other resources necessary to support the investigation were obtained and the investigation commenced.

As the investigation progressed, it became apparent that there were differences in the accounts of witnesses with regard to certain details of the events on May 26. These differences can be attributed to various factors including, but not limited to, inattention to specific details at the time the events occurred, inability to precisely recall details of the events due to the passage of time and, in some cases, inclination to color statements because of self-interest. Despite these differences, however, the substantial weight of the evidence was in agreement with regard to the most critical facts concerning this matter.

My findings concerning what occurred will address three areas: (1) The events relating to the motor vehicle stop of Hamlet E. Goore; (2) the events relating to the restoration of Hamlet E. Goore's vehicle registration and driving license; and (3) the events relating to processing the traffic tickets by the Borough of Fairview Municipal Court.

**A. THE EVENTS RELATING TO THE MOTOR VEHICLE STOP OF
HAMLET E. GOORE**

On May 26, 2006, the Police Department of the Borough of Fairview was participating in the "Click-it or Ticket" program, a statewide initiative to encourage seat belt use by motor vehicle drivers in New Jersey. At 7:00 A.M., a checkpoint was established on Fairview Avenue in the vicinity of the parking lot of Sparky's Restaurant at 560 Fairview Avenue. The checkpoint was staffed by Lieutenant Anthony Anari, who was positioned in the center of Fairview Avenue, which runs east and west. Lt. Anari was looking for seat belt violations but would also take note of any other obvious violations of the motor vehicle laws. Upon identifying an apparent violation, he would direct the operator of the vehicle into the parking lot for further attention.

Officers Albert Napolitano and Vincent M. Bellucci were stationed in Sparky's parking lot with their Police Department vehicle, (PD8), parked on the side of the parking lot near the restaurant entrance. Their vehicle was equipped with a Mobile Data Terminal that included a computer program known as Info-Cop. Info-Cop is an information software product which provides law enforcement personnel in the field with direct wireless access to local, state, and federal governmental databases. Info-Cop serves merely as a portal facilitating remote access to information. It provides no information independent of the official governmental records.

Officers Bellucci and Napolitano were assigned to deal with the drivers who had been directed into the parking lot by Lieutenant Anari. The officers' responsibilities included asking for a driver's license, registration, and insurance card and then using

the Info-Cop terminal to check the motor vehicle records related to that driver and vehicle. They were then responsible for issuing any tickets appropriate under the circumstances.

During the course of the initiative which ran from 7:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M., the State Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) records were checked for at least 48 drivers and at least 50 tickets were issued for motor vehicle law violations.

At approximately 9:40 A.M. on that date, Hamlet E. Goore was headed west on Fairview Avenue driving a green 1995 Oldsmobile van. Mr. Goore was a resident of North Bergen where he lived with Zulima Farber, the Attorney General of New Jersey. It was the Friday before the Memorial Day weekend and he and the Attorney General intended to leave later that day to spend the weekend at the shore. His van was packed with numerous items belonging to the two of them. Among the contents of the van were two bicycles, a set of golf clubs, tennis racquets, clothes, and various other personal items. There were also two cloth tote bags containing items related to the Attorney General's work. Although the Attorney General's work related items were considered private, there were no governmental materials of a confidential nature in the bags.

As Mr. Goore's vehicle approached, Lieutenant Anari observed a violation of some kind. He does not now recall specifically what that violation was. He directed Goore into the parking lot. Goore pulled into the lot and stopped on the side adjacent to the street, crossing the lined parking spaces at an angle to the guardrail which separated the lot from the sidewalk abutting the street. He was approached by Officer Napolitano,

who asked for his driver's license, registration and proof of insurance. The officer indicated that Mr. Goore produced only a driver's license.

At 9:45 A.M., Officer Napolitano accessed the Motor Vehicle Commission's records through the Info-Cop terminal. (He does not recall whether the actual look-up was done by himself or by Officer Bellucci since all inquiries that day were made pursuant to Officer Bellucci's sign in code.) The records showed that Mr. Goore's driver's license had been suspended since April 20, 2005, and that his vehicle registration had expired on January 31, 2005. (Although he initially produced no insurance card, our investigation revealed that Mr. Goore did in fact have insurance on that day and throughout the entire period his registration had lapsed.)

Upon learning of the status of Mr. Goore's license and registration, Officer Napolitano returned to Goore's van and advised him of the violations. He indicated that the vehicle could not be operated on the roadways, and that it would be necessary to impound it. Officer Napolitano also advised Mr. Goore that he could call someone to drive him home and to remove the contents of the vehicle before the vehicle was towed to the impound lot.

At 9:47 A.M., Hamlet Goore called the Attorney General on her cell phone. She had just finished taping a matter at the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice at 60 Park Place in Newark. She received the call as she was preparing to leave for an 11:00 A.M. appearance at a conference in Edison where she would be a principal speaker. Goore advised her that his vehicle was going to be impounded because of its unregistered status and that he needed help in removing its contents. The Attorney

General was focused on her Edison speech, which would be delivered in English and Spanish, and Goore's call was a distraction. She asked her driver/security officer, Lieutenant George Justin of the New Jersey State Police, if they had time to go to Goore's assistance. When Lt. Justin indicated that they had time to do so, she told Goore that she would come to assist him.

Accounts differ as to how Officer Napolitano first learned of the involvement of the Attorney General. Napolitano states that Goore volunteered the information that he was the Attorney General's boyfriend, asking whether that fact would make any difference. Goore indicates that he imparted the information only after Napolitano asked him who was coming to help with removing the contents of the van. Regardless of which version is believed, it is clear that Napolitano knew within a close proximity to the 9:47 A.M. phone call that the Attorney General was on her way to the scene.

At 9:50 A.M., Officer Napolitano completed writing a traffic ticket charging Mr. Goore with a violation of N.J.S.A. 39:3-4 (operating an unregistered vehicle). Shortly after that, he wrote a second ticket for violation of N.J.S.A. 39:3-40 (driving when license suspended). Although the second ticket indicates that it was written at 10:00 A.M., Napolitano stated that it was actually written earlier. (The investigation revealed that Officer Napolitano violated numerous administrative requirements designed to insure the integrity of the process for issuance of uniform traffic tickets including, but not limited to, pre-writing of information on blank tickets and using ticket books signed out to other officers.) Neither ticket was served on Mr. Goore at the time they were written. Officer Napolitano decided to exercise discretion and did not charge Goore with a seat

belt violation or with failure to have a registration or insurance card in his possession. The officer indicated that he did not want to appear to be overcharging and believed that the two charges for which he wrote tickets carried sufficiently severe sanctions.

Although the Attorney General had told Goore that she would come to assist him, she did not know the exact location of the motor vehicle stop. During the next ten minutes, after the initial phone call from Mr. Goore there followed a series of three phone calls between them, of one minute or less, during which the Attorney General was seeking to obtain a clearer idea of where the stop had occurred. During the same time frame, Lt. Justin was also trying to find out where they were to go. At 9:53 A.M. he called the Fairview Police Department and spoke to Sergeant Thomas Juliano. The call was recorded. The conversation proceeded as follows:

(9:53 A.M. Call-Lt. Justin & Sgt. Juliano.)

TJ Thomas Juliano
GJ George Justin
AA Anthony Anari

TJ Fairview Police, Juliano.

GJ How you doing, this is Lt. Justin with the State Police, is there either a shift supervisor or the Chief available, or anybody there?

TJ Uh, what do you need?

GJ I'm, I'm, assigned to the Attorney General's detail and uhm her boyfriend was just pulled over I guess and they impounded the car. Ahm, actually that car has all the Attorney General' stuff in there and we're gonna have to try and come up there and get the car as soon as possible. I don't know . . . (Fairview Police background noise).

TJ The car was just impounded?

GJ Yeah.

TJ Oh, so it was involved in an accident.

GJ No, no, I, I, I think he, he didn't renew his license or something, so they impounded the car.

TJ In our town?
GJ In Fairview right? . . .(Fairview Police Radio background noise.)

TJ Inaudible . . .(background noise), Ah, I'm not aware that we . . .just had a motor vehicle accident, that's the only impound that we had towed. Oh, you know what it might be because we're doing click-it, "Click-it or Ticket" that might be it.
GJ Oh, okay.

TJ Ah, could you, could you, just hold on one second? I got, I got somebody calling in, we're a little busy here today.
GJ Okay.

(Sgt. Juliano tends to police radio transmission, unrelated to call.)

TJ Just give me a minute, alright?
GJ Okay.

(Sgt. Juliano returns to unrelated call.)

TJ Hello, Sir?
GJ Yes.

TJ Alright, ahm, okay so you had a car that was impounded, that I'm not aware of, they should have let the desk know. But, ah, what type of car was it? Do you know?

GJ It was a, yeah, yeah, it's a van . . . (Justin speaking to Attorney General): what is that, what type of van is that, do you know? I'm gonna guess that it's maybe a Plymouth, a blue Plymouth van.

. . . .(Back to TJ.)

TJ Blue Plymouth.
GJ The driver's name is Hamlet Goore, G-O-O-R-E. (Inaudible) . . .I'm supposed to have her at a 11:00 stop down in Edison, but we're racing up there real quick to try to, ah, I don't know if there's anyway to expedite to get that car back.

TJ I'm sure we could, just let me find out whether they actually towed this car or not, or whether we have, you have the right town or whatever. Hold on one second.
GJ Yeah, okay.

(Sgt. Juliano converses on police radio.)

TJ Headquarters to Lieutenant Anari.
AA Go ahead.

TJ Lieutenant are you guys impounding cars down there?
AA Not yet.

TJ You didn't impound any cars?
AA Negative.

TJ Ah, standby.
AA Alright.

(Sgt. Juliano back on phone with Justin.)

TJ Alright, just hold on one second they didn't they didn't have anything.
GJ Okay.

(Sgt. Juliano talking to someone in background)

TJ Mike, Michael, who's in the back? No, Mike Martic, Mike did we impound
a van? A blue Plymouth this morning? Nothing, right?

(Sgt. Juliano back on phone with Justin.)

TJ Hello.
GJ Hello.

TJ Okay, now ahm, this just happened? Because we did not impound,
impound any cars because we had one impound and that was on an
accident call and it wasn't, it wasn't on a blue Plymouth van. Maybe you
have the wrong town.

GJ No, yeah he definitely said ah, Fairview. You know what I, I'll call you
back in a couple minutes.

TJ Yeah give me a call back, because we definitely did not have that.
GJ Okay.

TJ Alright.
GJ Okay, what, what was your name again?

TJ Sergeant Juliano
GJ Okay, sarge, I appreciate it, my name is George Justin, like I said I'm a

Lieutenant with the State Police.

TJ Okay, just get back to me, let me know.

GJ I will, thank you.

TJ Okay guy, bye-bye.

While the telephone calls were in progress, Lt. Justin and the Attorney General were traveling toward Fairview. By 10:00 A.M., they had been able to figure out exactly where they were headed. They proceeded north on the New Jersey Turnpike to Exit 16E and then took local roads to the scene. They traveled approximately 13 miles in about 23 or 24 minutes. They were riding in an unmarked State Police SUV and Lt. Justin was driving at a rate of speed consistent with the way he would normally drive the Attorney General. He employed no siren at any time, and no flashing lights were employed until the last 100-150 feet of the journey. This use of these lights will be discussed later.

While Lt. Justin and the Attorney General were driving to Fairview, events were unfolding at the scene of the motor vehicle stop. At some point after 9:58 A.M. and before 10:09 A.M., Officer Napolitano approached Lt. Anari to advise him of Goore's relationship with the Attorney General and of the fact that she was on her way to the scene. Officer Bellucci, who was also working the "Click-it or Ticket" detail had become aware of these facts shortly after Officer Napolitano had learned them.

During this time Mayor Vincent Bellucci arrived at the scene. Although there is some question about the exact time he arrived, it is clear that by 10:04 A.M., he was at the scene. Mayor Bellucci stated that he had the day off and had been at the gym. He

asserted that he had missed a call from his son so he stopped by Sparky's to talk with him. A review of the Mayor's cell phone records confirms a call to the Mayor at 9:48 A.M. from his son, Officer Vincent M. Bellucci. As part of the investigation, the cell phone records of all other participants in this matter have also been reviewed and there is no record of any other calls to the Mayor during this period.

Although he indicated that he stopped at the scene to see his son, it is clear that after speaking with his son, the Mayor decided to stay around until the Attorney General's arrival. Other than greeting the Attorney General when she arrived, the Mayor indicated that he had no involvement in any way in the events which unfolded. All persons present at the scene were interviewed, and no one offered evidence to establish that the Mayor was involved with regard to the disposition of Goore's vehicle or the tickets which had been written.

At some point after Lt. Anari became aware of the Attorney General's involvement, Hamlet Goore asked if the van could be towed to his home instead of being impounded. Anari agreed to the request and at 10:09 A.M. Officer Napolitano radioed Sgt. Juliano at the desk to request a "private tow." Within the Department, the term "private tow" refers to a tow other than to the impound lot. Most typically, it would refer to a tow of a car involved in an accident, where the vehicle would be towed to its owner's residence or to a private garage for repairs. The substance of the call is as follows:

(10:09 A.M. Radio Call by Napolitano requesting a tow.)

AN Albert Napolitano
TJ Sgt. T. Juliano

AN Portable 22 to Quarters.
AN Portable 22 to Quarters

TJ Go ahead.
AN Can you have View respond to 560 Fairview Av. for a private tow.

TJ Give me that again.
AN Can you have View respond to 560 Fairview Avenue, for a private tow.

TJ Received.

(View refers to View Towing, the company that provides towing services for the city.)

Lt. Anari had also made a decision concerning disposition of the tickets that Napolitano had written 20 minutes earlier but had not yet served on Goore. That development is revealed in a call at 10:11 A.M. from Lt. Anari to Sgt. Juliano. That call proceeded as follows:

(10:11 A.M. phone call, Anari and Juliano.)

AA Anthony Anari
TJ Tom Juliano
AN Albert Napolitano

TJ Fairview Police Juliano.
AA (Inaudible) ... who called you the State Police?

TJ Yes.
AA Yeah, alright, we're taking care of this.

TJ What is it?
AA It's the Attorney General's family.

TJ Well why the hell didn't you tell me that?
AA I didn't know, I was standing in the street.
(Napolitano in background speaking while Anari is speaking: Inaudible)

TJ (Inaudible.)
AA I was standing in the street, I didn't know, alright.
AN (Napolitano in background speaking, simultaneously with Anari): Don't worry about it ...(inaudible)...is a bad person.

TJ Well, when I asked Al why didn't he tell me that?
AA Cause he, I don't know, I don't know maybe he's talking in riddles, Al, who knows, I don't know.
AN I'm talking in riddles.

AA I don't know, so what did the guy say from the state police?
TJ Nothing, he said that they need that car, don't, don't tow it, they, they

AA No, don't worry about it, I took care of it.
TJ That there's all sorts of attorney general's shit in the car, they need that. (Inaudible) ... They're sending somebody up there, you know, when the guy calls me back, I will, uh...

AA Inaudible..call you back the car's parked here.
TJ Okay.

AA Alright, don't worry about it, we eat the tickets, we do whatever, he...
TJ Okay.

AA Alright, I didn't know, I was in the street, so.
TJ Okay, okay,okay.

AA Taken care of.
TJ Alright, bye-bye.

AA Alright.

Officer Napolitano acknowledged that he heard the statement concerning eating the tickets.

At 10:10 A.M., the Attorney General called Mr. Goore to advise that she had turned onto Kennedy Boulevard and was just a few minutes away. She had not arrived when Lt. Anari spoke with Sgt. Juliano at 10:11 A.M., but had arrived when Anari spoke with Juliano in another call at 10:14 A.M. The substance of that call is as follows:

(10:14 A.M. Phone Call-Sgt. T. Juliano and Lt. A. Anari)

TJ Sgt. Thomas Juliano
AA Lt. Anthony Anari

HG Hamlet Goore

TJ Tony?
AA Yeah.

TJ Listen that that ah, private tow though, that that's coming or do you still want me to cancel that tow?
AA No, (Anari talks to male in background) where, where do you live?
HG 8509...(inaudible)

AA Yeah, tell them to come down here, alright.
TJ Ah, for what though not the blue van?

AA Yeah, (mumbles), just tell them to come down here, I want it, is it Michael?
TJ No, listen.

AA Alright, skip it, I'll call Al.
TJ Oh, oh my God, I just want to know, I just want to know, whether that tow is coming for that blue van, because if it is I'm going to cancel it.

AA Yeah, tell him to come here, no, no, no, we want it towed.
TJ What?

AA I'll explain, just tell him to come here.
TJ I'm, I'm not understanding, just ah, (speaking over each other).

AA Alright, good, I'll call Al.
TJ Alright but what, "Nut" (nickname for Anari)?

AA Yeah?
TJ When, when the people from the Attorney General call me, what am I supposed to tell them?

AA They're here already Tom, They're here.
TJ Oh, okay that, that's what I wanted to know.

AA Alright.
TJ Alright.

AA Alright brother.

As Lt. Justin approached the "Click-it or Ticket" checkpoint heading west on Fairview Avenue, traffic ahead of him had slowed down. He pulled into the eastbound

lane and passed several cars before pulling into the parking lot at Sparky's. At the time, he entered the lane for oncoming traffic, he activated the emergency flashing lights on the front of his vehicle. He indicated that he did so because he did not want the local police to think he was trying to avoid the check point. He pulled his SUV into the lot and parked across the designated parking lines on an angle to the guardrail and slightly behind the Goore van. He exited the SUV on the driver's side and the Attorney General got out on the passenger's side. The events that followed occurred during a span of approximately seven minutes.

When the Attorney General exited the SUV, she was met almost immediately by the Mayor. They did not know each other and the Mayor introduced himself. After engaging in some brief pleasantries, the Mayor began to discuss some concerns he had about how a case involving a friend of his had been handled before the State Board of Medical Examiners. The Attorney General, not wanting to be impolite, listened briefly but was able to end the conversation by giving the Mayor her card and telling him to have his friend's attorney call her office. Upon ending the conversation, she joined Mr. Goore at the rear of his vehicle which was in proximity to the center of the parking area. They were trying to figure out how to deal with removal of the items in the van.

While the Attorney General was talking to the Mayor, Lt. Justin was speaking with the local police. The substance of that conversation is disputed. Officer Napolitano states that when Lt. Justin exited the SUV, he was the first person to whom Justin spoke. Napolitano says that Lt. Justin claimed that the Fairview computer system was wrong about Mr. Goore's motor vehicle records. Napolitano states that Lt. Justin then

saw Lt. Anari and thereafter directed his attention to the ranking officer.

Lt. Anari states that after speaking with Napolitano, Lt. Justin approached him and asserted that there were important State documents and things that belonged to the Attorney General in the van and that he could not let the van leave his sight. Anari indicated that he had requested a private tow to have the van driven to Goore's home free of charge. He asserts that Lt. Justin indicated the private tow was unacceptable and demanded that the van be released to be driven home. Anari states that he then acceded to the demand.

Lt. Justin denies making any demands on the Fairview Police Officers or making any comments about incorrect motor vehicle records. He asserts that Lt. Anari offered a private tow free of charge and that the Attorney General, standing nearby, overheard the officer and rejected it. He states that Lt. Anari then stated that it would be okay to have Goore drive the car home provided he was followed by the Trooper and Attorney General.

The Attorney General asserts that she was not involved in this discussion. She states that while she was standing in the lot with Mr. Goore, there was a group of police officers standing behind her with the Mayor also in the area of the group. She says that at some point she heard someone, whose voice she could not identify, state that they would tow the van for free. She states that she then said, "No. Hamlet will pay for the tow." She indicates that one of the Fairview officers then suggested that, since the SUV was a police vehicle, maybe it wouldn't be necessary to tow the van at all if the Attorney General and State Police could follow the van to insure it would ultimately be

taken off the road and not driven once they got home. Lt. Justin agreed that they could follow Mr. Goore's vehicle as they were going that way, anyway. The Attorney General did not object to the suggestion. She indicated in her interview that she thought it was an acceptable alternative to removing everything from the van.

What is not in dispute is that the Attorney General, Lt. Justin, Lt. Anari and Officer Napolitano all were aware of the law prohibiting the operation of unregistered vehicles on the roadways and that all allowed the unregistered vehicle to be driven home by Mr. Goore. The Attorney General indicates that she was not aware, at that time, of the charge that Goore had been driving while his license was suspended. Justin, Anari, and Napolitano were all aware of the charge. Nevertheless, they not only permitted the unregistered vehicle to be operated on the roadway, they also permitted it to be operated by a driver charged with being suspended.

After the discussion about allowing Mr. Goore to drive the van home, at some point, Officer Napolitano, holding aloft the tickets he had written earlier, inquired: "What are we going to do about these?". Napolitano, who had already heard Anari indicate that they would "eat the tickets," states that Anari told him to hold onto the tickets. Lt. Justin says that Anari responded that he would take care of the tickets and close them out "administratively". Justin says he looked at Napolitano and rolled his eyes. Lt. Anari says that he told Napolitano to hold onto the tickets because there might be a computer glitch.

The Attorney General indicates that she did not hear this discussion and was unaware of anything regarding the tickets. Lt. Justin states that the Attorney General

was walking back to the van when the discussion occurred. Officer Napolitano, on the other hand, indicates that while the Attorney General did not participate in this discussion, she was standing close enough to be able to hear it. Lt. Anari's testimony on this point is similar to Napolitano's.

The evidence establishes that the Attorney General did not actually participate in the discussion concerning disposition of the tickets. It is inconclusive, however, as to whether she was aware of the discussions. What is not controverted is the fact that the tickets were never served on Mr. Goore while he was at the scene and that Lt. Justin, Lt. Anari, and Officer Napolitano were all aware of that fact.

Once he got back to police headquarters, Officer Napolitano prepared "Traffic Summons Dismissal Requests" for each of the two tickets. The requests, in the form of certifications, were prepared and submitted to the Fairview Municipal Court, to the attention of Judge Roberts. In each dismissal request, Officer Napolitano certified that an error was made in completing the summons, the error being: "info-cop information incorrect".

When Officer Napolitano was questioned in a department investigation about the filing of the certifications, he at first stated that he had re-checked the MVC records at headquarters and found them to be in error. After being informed by his superior that inquiry entries to the computer could be checked, he changed his statement. He then stated that he was advised by Lt. Anari not to issue the tickets because of the Attorney General's involvement. He indicated that his request for dismissal was a professional courtesy to the Attorney General and that he, therefore, had not felt it necessary to re-

check the records in the computer. When Officer Napolitano was questioned during this investigation, he indicated that his statement "info-cop information incorrect" was in reliance upon the statements of Mr. Goore and Lt. Justin, that the information reported through the computer was in error. He made this claim despite his prior statements and despite the fact that Goore claimed an error only with respect to his driver's license records. No one ever claimed any inaccuracy in the records with regard to the expired registration.

As will be discussed later, the tickets were never dismissed by the municipal court. Goore paid a fine for operating an unregistered vehicle and is presently contesting the charge of driving while suspended. That charge is pending before the Municipal Court Presiding Judge for the Bergen vicinage.

B. THE EVENTS RELATING TO THE RESTORATION OF HAMLET E. GOORE'S DRIVING PRIVILEGES

By 10:22 A.M., Mr. Goore had returned to his residence with the Attorney General and Lt. Justin following behind him. When they arrived at the house, the van was parked in the driveway. Lt. Justin sat in the SUV which was parked in the street while the Attorney General and Mr. Goore spoke briefly in the driveway. The Attorney General asked Mr. Goore not to drive the van and to make sure it got registered. He told her that there was a mix-up with his driver's license and that he needed to get that straightened out, as well.

Each of them immediately began making phone calls in order to get in touch with a mutual friend, Angel Estrada, the manager of the Motor Vehicle Commission Agency at Elizabeth, N.J. Mr. Estrada has been a close friend of the Attorney General for about thirty years.

Between 10:22 A.M. and 10:24 A.M., the Attorney General called 411 three times in an effort to get the telephone number for the Elizabeth office of Mr. Estrada. As a result of the first two calls, she got numbers for 609 and 800 area codes which were the numbers available to the general public, but not the number of the Elizabeth Office. It is the policy of the MVC not to publish local agency numbers in order that all calls be handled by their central phone bank of specially trained operators. Through the third 411 call, she obtained the number for the Elizabeth Municipal Court where she knew Mr. Estrada's wife worked. At 10:27 A.M., she called the court and learned that Mrs.

Estrada had the day off. The Attorney General then retrieved her tote bags from the van and returned to the SUV to continue on her way to her 11:00 A.M. engagement in Edison.

While the Attorney General was on her cell phone, Mr. Goore was also making calls on his cell phone trying to reach Estrada. His programmed number for Estrada's cell phone was out-of-date. Eventually he reached a mutual friend, Orlando Edreira, who was able to contact Estrada on Goore's behalf.

At 10:44 A.M. Estrada called Goore. Their discussion lasted six minutes. While Estrada was on the line with Goore, he received a call from the Attorney General at 10:48 A.M. She told Estrada that Hamlet had a problem. Estrada replied that he was on the other line with Hamlet at that time. The Attorney General then asked Estrada if he could handle everything that needed to be done. When he advised her that he could do so, she ended the call.

When Estrada ended his call with Goore, he placed a call to the central office of the Motor Vehicle Commission. He spoke to Danielle Piccinetti of the Court Suspension Unit. Their conversation proceeded as follows:

DP Motor Vehicle Commission, How can I help you?

AE Hi, Good Morning, is this Danielle?

DP Yes.

AE This is Angel Estrada the Manager of the Elizabeth Motor Vehicle Office.

DP Hi how are you?

AE How are you?

DP Good.

AE You were so kind to help me a few weeks back with one other problem I had with, ah, Mark (inaudible)

DP Yes, I remember.

AE I have a gentleman here today who has a problem and I just said let me reach out because I'm trying to find out in the system as to why he's, ah, suspended and I can not come up with an answer.

DP Ok, What is the driver's license?

AE The driver's license number is (license number redacted), ah, his first name is Hamlet, the last name is Goore.

DP He had a parking offense.

AE That's it.

DP Yep, I got' a clear it in the system hold on one second.

(Call placed on HOLD, music playing)

DP Ok, he's restored. What happened was when he had the parking ticket, he paid back in, a year ago...

AE Right.

DP He paid it, umm, May 2nd 2005, but no one ever contacted us.

AE Ok, and that was, that was what, ah, what municipality?

DP umm, (pause) North Bergen.

AE North Bergen.

DP Ah hum, So anytime someone gets a ticket they have to contact us because the Courts don't.

AE I see, ok.. .

DP So he's fine now and he's restored as of May 2nd 2005.

AE Oh, ok.

DP Ok, Does he need a.. was he pulled over or anything. Does he need a letter stating?

AE Ahh, no, no, no, I think he was just concerned. I don't know, I don't know he don't tell me anything about getting pulled over.

DP Ok, If he got pulled over and was issued a ticket, just call me back and I'll submit him a letter.

AE Ok, Alright let me ask you the next, the next question.

DP ah um.

AE For my own education, I went to driver history and driver history you can go to PF4 which says Restoration Requirements, right. I'm looking (inaudible).

DP Not ours, we hit 2 and enter.

AE Oh, I see.

DP That's how we find it.

AE Oh, ok you hit 2 and enter.

DP Ah, um, then it will show what's outstanding.

AE Right, ok.

DP Ok.

AE Alright.

DP Have good day.

AE So he's, he's... it's all settled now, ok.

DP Everything's fine.

AE Thanks very much.

DP You're welcome.

AE Ok, bye bye.

DP Bye.

At 10:57 A.M., Mr. Goore's driving privileges were restored in the MVC records, effective as of May 2, 2005. Goore's privileges had originally been suspended on April 20, 2005, as the result of failure to respond to a parking ticket issued in the Borough of North Bergen. He paid the fine in the municipal court on May 2, 2005. The payment was recorded in the Judiciary's Automated Traffic System (ATS). ATS is the state judiciary's official traffic offense record keeping system. Goore mailed payment of a license restoration fee of \$100 to the Motor Vehicle Commission on May 2nd which was posted to the Commission's automated system on May 11, 2005, and shown as effective on the postmark date of the payment. Despite the fact that both the parking ticket fines and the license restoration fee were paid, driving privileges were not restored on the MVC computer records. The MVC asserts that it did not restore Goore's driving license at that time because it had not received the required municipal court proof of payment receipt with Goore's license restoration fee payment. Goore asserts that the receipt accompanied his license restoration fee payment.

The only way for MVC to verify payment of a parking ticket when it has not received a payment receipt issued by the court is to inquire into the court's ATS records. Because of the high volume of parking tickets, MVC does not routinely conduct such inquiries to verify payments. This has posed a problem for people who have paid both their parking tickets and the MVC restoration fee but have lost the receipt or otherwise cannot produce proof of payment of the parking ticket. As a result, if a receipt is unavailable, MVC practices now allow appropriate MVC employees to

access the court's ATS system directly, upon request, to confirm payment of the parking ticket. Upon confirmation, MVC will authorize restoration of the driver's license as of the date of latest payment of both the court penalty and MVC restoration fee. Danielle Piccinetti is an MVC employee authorized to address these matters. On May 26, 2006, when Danielle Piccinetti manually accessed the Court's ATS system, saw that payment of both the parking ticket and restoration fee had been made on May 2, 2005, and therefore acted to reinstate Goore's driving privileges as of that date as a matter of standard practice.

The restoration of Mr. Goore's driving privileges, as well as the renewal of the registration of Goore's vehicle, both occurred before he ever arrived at the Elizabeth Office of the MVC. At about 10:57, after restoration of Goore's driving privileges, Estrada called Goore again. This call lasted for about nine minutes. During that time, Estrada prepared a registration renewal application for Goore's van. Although Goore had neither signed the certification on the application or provided payment for the \$137 fee, Estrada instructed Susan Brito of his staff to renew the registration in the MVC computer records. She recorded the relevant information, including payment, in the MVC computer system and, at 11:04 A.M., Mr. Goore's registration was renewed in the MVC records. At 12:09 P.M., Mr. Goore appeared at the Elizabeth Office for the first time. He provided a check to cover the applicable fees but apparently, through oversight, never signed the certification on his renewal application. After providing his check to Estrada, Goore was handed a renewed registration card.

C. THE EVENTS RELATING TO PROCESSING THE TRAFFIC TICKETS BY THE BOROUGH OF FAIRVIEW MUNICIPAL COURT

This section addresses the question of how Hamlet Goore could pay a ticket that was never served on him.

In New Jersey, every traffic and parking ticket issued by municipal courts to police officers has an individually preassigned number. Each ticket must be accounted for to the municipal court that provides the tickets. Therefore, Officer Napolitano had to account to the court for the two tickets which he had written, but did not serve, on Mr. Goore. For this reason, upon returning to police headquarters, he prepared two "Traffic Summons Dismissal Request" forms for submission to Municipal Court Judge Keith J. Roberts for his review and approval. Napolitano annexed the court copy of each ticket to its respective dismissal request. Although the tickets were never served on Goore, each one indicated a scheduled court date of June 21, 2006, at 3:00 P.M.

Upon receiving the tickets and dismissal requests, the Deputy Court Administrator, Christopher Rossi, entered the tickets into ATS on June 14, 2006. Mr. Rossi asserts that he did not receive the tickets until June 14 or, at most, a day or two before. Our investigation could find no reason explaining the delay in forwarding the tickets to the court.

The requests to dismiss the tickets required review and approval by the Municipal Court Judge. Since court would be in session on June 14th, Rossi

rescheduled the return date on the tickets from June 21st to June 14th. He entered the new date in the computer in order to place both dismissal requests on the ATS produced court calendar for that day's session. He then forwarded the tickets and dismissal requests to Judge Roberts for a decision during that afternoon's court session. However, the judge did not deal with the requests that day. As a result, the charges in the tickets remained open and it appeared on the court's records as if Hamlet Goore had failed to respond to a scheduled court event, even though he had never been served with the tickets or given notice of the event.

Where there is a failure to respond on time in response to a ticket which can be paid-on-line or by mail, the ATS system will generate a "Failure to Appear Notice". The charge of driving an unregistered vehicle can be paid on-line or by mail. As a result, a "Failure to Appear Notice" was generated and mailed to Mr. Goore on June 19th. Since a charge of driving while suspended cannot be dealt with by a payment on-line or by mail, no "Failure to Appear Notice" was sent out with respect to the second ticket. That ticket was forwarded by Mr. Rossi to the Court Administrator for further processing.

By June 21, 2006, Hamlet Goore had received the "Failure to Appear Notice" with respect to the ticket charging him with operating an unregistered vehicle. This was the first paperwork he had received with regard to any charges arising out of the events of May 26, 2006. On June 21st at 7:05 P.M., the ticket was paid on-line using a credit card. Goore became aware of the driving while suspended ticket when his attorney contacted the court after public questions had arisen about the case. That case is presently outstanding.

III. CONCLUSIONS

For the purposes of this matter, I have been designated as the Acting Attorney General. My mandate includes the power to investigate to determine if there have been violations of the law which warrant criminal prosecution. My mandate also includes the responsibility to determine whether violations other than criminal may have occurred and, if so, to make appropriate findings.

I have considered the conduct of Lt. George Justin, Lt. Anthony Anari, and Officer Albert Napolitano. It is clear that none of these officers acted for reasons of personal gain. Rather, it appears that each was motivated by a misguided sense of loyalty to a superior authority. Although there are differences in their accounts of what happened on May 26, 2006, each officer, by his own account, failed to perform his duty on that day. Those failures facilitated the unwarranted favorable treatment received by Hamlet Goore and, in doing so, breached the public's trust and undermined confidence in the fairness and integrity with which laws are enforced in New Jersey.

Having considered the conduct of the officers in the circumstances of this case and having considered the appropriate consequences for their behavior, I do not believe that pursuit of criminal charges is warranted. In order to appropriately address their conduct, I will recommend to their respective department heads that each officer be disciplined for failure to perform his duty and receive a sanction of 14 days suspension without pay. Each officer has agreed not to contest the recommended discipline.

I also have concluded that the evidence does not justify the filing of criminal charges against the Attorney General. There is no evidence that she personally

directed or solicited anyone to provide unwarranted benefits for herself or Hamlet Goore. There is disputed testimony that Lt. Justin demanded the release of Goore's vehicle, but there is no evidence that he did so at the direction or request of the Attorney General. While there is evidence to establish that the Attorney General was aware of, and acquiesced in, some of the favorable treatment received by Mr. Goore, I do not believe that conduct warrants a criminal prosecution. Nevertheless, her conduct does raise significant ethical questions that must be addressed.

N.J.S.A. 52:130-23 requires the head of each State agency to promulgate a code of ethics to govern and guide the conduct of the State officers and employees in that agency. Pursuant to that statute, a Code of Ethics has been promulgated for the Department of Law and Public Safety and formally approved by the Executive Commission on Ethical Standards. Among the purposes of the Code is the preservation of public confidence in the administration of justice and the enforcement of laws.

Section II A of the Code provides:

Officers and employees shall avoid any knowing conduct that might reasonably be expected to create an impression or suspicion among the public having knowledge of their acts that they are engaged in conduct violative of the public's trust.

The events of May 26, 2006, started with a motor vehicle stop of Hamlet Goore during which he was advised that he would be charged with two offenses: (1) driving while his license was suspended, and (2) operating an unregistered vehicle. Because of the latter charge, he was informed that his van would be impounded. The events ended with Mr. Goore receiving no tickets and driving his vehicle home in violation of

the motor vehicle laws.

These circumstances on their face might reasonably be expected to create an impression or suspicion of conduct violative of the public's trust. The question is whether the Attorney General's conduct contributed to the creation of that impression or suspicion.

The Attorney General's involvement began when she decided to go to the scene of the motor vehicle stop of someone with whom she had a close personal relationship. There is no indication that, in making this decision, the Attorney General gave any consideration to a possible conflict between addressing personal issues and fulfilling her professional responsibilities. Upon receiving Hamlet Goore's call, she focused almost exclusively on coming to his assistance.

The office of Attorney General is one of the most powerful positions in state government. As the state's chief law enforcement officer, the Attorney General has broad supervisory authority over all law enforcement agencies in the state. A decision to go to a routine traffic stop is most unusual. Coming to the scene of a traffic stop, where you have a personal interest in the outcome of police decisions made at the scene, creates a serious risk of raising public suspicion about the legitimacy of those decisions. It also creates a risk of inhibiting the local police officers at the scene. It does not appear that the Attorney General ever considered these risks.

There is no evidence that the Attorney General explicitly asked for preferential treatment of Mr. Goore at any time. However, Hamlet Goore did, in fact, receive preferential treatment. Prior to her arrival, the Fairview Police had already called for a

private tow and had indicated that they would “eat the tickets”. There can be little doubt that these actions were influenced by Mr. Goore’s relationship with the Attorney General and the fact that she was on her way to the scene.

The Attorney General might argue that her decision to go to Mr. Goore’s assistance had precipitated some unforeseen consequences prior to her arrival. However, that argument cannot be made with respect to events which occurred after she arrived at the scene.

The Attorney General stated that she expected the police to perform their duties as they would normally do, unaffected by her presence; yet, she ignored signs that such was not occurring. While the evidence does not establish that the Mayor played any role in the events which occurred, nevertheless, the unusual circumstance of his presence at a routine traffic stop should have raised questions in the Attorney General’s mind as to whether what was going on was simply business as usual.

Although, the fact of being greeted by the Mayor apparently did not raise any questions in the Attorney General’s mind, she was soon confronted by a clear indication that the police were, in fact, not performing their duties in the usual manner. She became aware of the fact that the police were offering to have Mr. Goore’s car towed to his home free of charge. While by her account, she rejected the idea of a free tow, she did not reject the idea of a tow if paid for by Mr. Goore. The proposal to tow the vehicle to Goore’s home was an obvious departure from the original plans of the police to impound the vehicle. It was clearly a more favorable outcome for Mr. Goore. Instead of being secured at the impound lot, with the attendant costs and

inconvenience, the unregistered vehicle would leave the control of the police on nothing more than an assurance that it would not be operated until properly registered. Despite this clear indication of favorable treatment, the Attorney General did nothing to discourage or stop it. Instead she indicated a tow was permissible as long as Goore paid for it.

Ultimately, the Attorney General allowed conduct that was even more favorable to Mr. Goore. Whether the arrangement was offered by the police or demanded by Lt. Justin is immaterial. By approving actions which allowed Mr. Goore to drive his vehicle home, the Attorney General knowingly acted to secure a benefit for Mr. Goore that was violative of the motor vehicle laws and obviously not available to the general public.

As to whether the Attorney General was aware of discussions at the scene concerning disposition of the tickets, the best that can be said is that the evidence is inconclusive. Based on her presence at the scene and her conduct with regard to the disposition of the unregistered vehicle, it is understandable why members of the public could reasonably have a suspicion that the Attorney General had some awareness that the tickets had not been served on Hamlet Goore. Unfortunately, the evidence is not sufficiently clear to either justify or remove that suspicion.

For these reasons, it is my conclusion that the Attorney General's conduct constitutes a violation of *Section II A* of the Code of Ethics of the Department of Law and Public Safety.

***Section II B* of the Code provides:**

Offices or employees shall not use an official position to receive unwarranted privileges, benefits, or advantages for themselves or others.

It is clear that Hamlet Goore was permitted to drive his vehicle home in violation of the motor vehicle laws. It is also clear that the only reason he was allowed to do this was because he would be followed on the roadway by the Attorney General and her State Police security officer. In agreeing to this arrangement, the Attorney General allowed her position to be used to secure an unwarranted benefit for Mr. Goore. It is self evident that an ordinary citizen confronted with the same charges as Mr. Goore would not have the benefit of a State Police and Attorney General escort to avoid impoundment of his car.

In reaching this conclusion, I am mindful of the concept of police discretion and the argument that what was involved here was simply an act of discretion by the Fairview Police officers. I am not persuaded by that argument. There is no indication from the officers that they thought they were exercising discretion in allowing Mr. Goore to drive home. The officers were clearly aware of their discretionary powers as indicated by Officer Napolitano's conscious decision not to charge Mr. Goore with violations for failure to wear a seat belt and failure to exhibit his registration and insurance card. Despite this, they did not offer the exercise of police discretion as a reason for their actions in allowing Goore to drive home. The varied explanations for their decision range from offering professional courtesy to the Attorney General to feeling intimidated by her presence. Regardless of which explanation, if any, is believed, the police did not assert that what they did was an exercise of discretion that would normally be offered to members of the general public. Neither do I believe that the Attorney General could reasonably interpret what occurred as an act of police

discretion. To come within that concept, the advantage afforded to Mr. Goore would have to be one generally afforded to other motorists. In this case, the Attorney General stated that the police indicated that the benefit was conditioned on Mr. Goore being followed home by the Attorney General and her security officer. That condition would obviously not be available to the general public.

It is my conclusion that the Attorney General's conduct, as described, constitutes a violation of *Section II B* of the Code of Ethics of the Department of Law and Public Safety.

***Section II C* provides:**

Officers or employees shall not perform their official duties in any manner from which it might be reasonably inferred that the influence.... of a personal relationship...caused them to act in a biased or partial manner.

The Attorney General is the state's chief law enforcement officer. She is charged with responsibility for ensuring that the laws are faithfully and fairly enforced.

In this case, the Attorney General's purpose in going to the scene of the motor vehicle stop was to come to the aid of a loved one. That intent does not negate her responsibilities as Attorney General. Her official duty to see that the laws are faithfully and fairly enforced is a continuing one. Because of the nature of her responsibilities, she could not escape the fact that she was on duty when she decided to go to the scene of the vehicle stop and throughout all the time she was there.

When Lt. Justin first called the Fairview Police Department, he made the call on behalf of the Attorney General, not on behalf of Zulima Farber, private citizen. When

the Attorney General arrived at the scene in the State Police SUV with lights flashing and security escort, she did not arrive as simply a private citizen. When Lt. Justin dealt with the local police, he did not do so on behalf of a private citizen. And when the Attorney General agreed to provide an escort to allow Hamlet Goore to drive his vehicle home, she did not do so as a private citizen.

On the basis of her conduct as previously described, the Attorney General did not fulfill her duty to ensure that the laws were faithfully and fairly enforced. The conclusion is inescapable that her personal relationship with Hamlet Goore caused her to act in a partial manner. For this reason, it is my conclusion that the Attorney General's conduct constitutes a violation of *Section II C* of the Code of Ethics of the Department of Law and Public Safety.

A final question remains concerning the actions of the Attorney General with respect to the restoration of Hamlet Goore's driving privileges and the renewal of his vehicle registration. It is clear that the Attorney General and Hamlet Goore sought out Angel Estrada to help in expediting the resolution of Goore's problems concerning his driver's license and registration. The Attorney General had a family friendship with Mr. Estrada for almost thirty years before she assumed her current position. In light of that longstanding friendship, it does not appear that the Attorney General was using her official position to secure Estrada's help.

She spoke to Estrada on the phone for approximately three minutes advising him that Hamlet Goore was trying to get in touch with him and asking him if he could help. There is no indication that she asked Mr. Estrada to do anything of an

unauthorized nature. At the most, she was asking for some personalized and perhaps prioritized treatment from a longtime friend.

Mr. Estrada's handling of this matter before Hamlet Goore arrived at the MVC agency raises questions about the propriety of his practices and whether they were in compliance with MVC procedures. It is not within my mandate to review the efficacy of MVC practices and procedures. My charge is to determine whether favorable treatment was received by the Attorney General or Mr. Goore.

While it appears that Mr. Goore probably did receive some favorable treatment from Mr. Estrada, that treatment essentially was in the nature of receiving personal attention and having data entered into the computer about one hour before it would have been entered otherwise.

The Attorney General did not need to call Mr. Estrada. There is no reason to believe that Mr. Goore could not have addressed this matter himself. However, there is no indication that the Attorney General used her official position for leverage in dealing with a longtime friend or that any quid pro quo was given for Estrada's priority attention to the matter. While her call to Estrada, like earlier decisions made that day, may have demonstrated a level of insensitivity to ethical concerns, I cannot conclude that in this case it violated the Code of Ethics.

IV. STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

Special Counsel Dennis L. Bliss, Esq.

Dennis L. Bliss is an attorney, currently Of Counsel to Foss, San Filippo and Milne, LLC, Red Bank, New Jersey. Mr. Bliss retired in 2003 after thirty-three years in government service as an attorney and senior manager in the executive and judicial branches of New Jersey Government. Mr. Bliss is a graduate of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ and Indiana University School of Law, Bloomington, Indiana.

He was the head of the Municipal Court Services Division of the NJ Administrative Office of the Courts for 18 years prior to his retirement in 2003. Prior to joining the AOC, in 1986, Mr. Bliss was an Assistant Attorney General and Director of Administration for the Department of Law and Public Safety, a Special Assistant to the Attorney General, and a Deputy Attorney General and Chief of the Internal Affairs Bureau of the Division of Criminal Justice. He was also Chief Counsel to the New Jersey State Police and Police Training Commission (1972 through 1985).

In 2001, Mr. Bliss retired as a Colonel in the New Jersey Army National Guard and was awarded The Legion of Merit. He is a certified military criminal trial and defense counsel. He presently serves as Legal Advisor to the Headquarters, New Jersey Naval Militia Joint Command in the New Jersey State Guard.

Mr. Bliss currently is providing consulting services to the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University. He also serves as special assistant to the mediator in United States District Court for the District of New Jersey litigation involving the development of written protocols for use by code enforcement officers and police officers when conducting housing inspections or making motor vehicle or pedestrian stops. He is a member of the Supreme Court Municipal Court Practice Committee and Chair of the Municipal Court Administrator Certification Board.

Special Counsel Susan H. Curcio, Esq.

Susan H. Curcio is an attorney with law offices in Hammonton, NJ. She is certified by the Supreme Court of New Jersey as a Criminal Trial Attorney.

Ms. Curcio is also an adjunct member of the faculty at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey where she teaches in the Criminal Justice program and is a guest lecturer in the social work seminar on techniques in child welfare.

Ms. Curcio is a retired Chief Assistant Prosecutor, having served twenty five years as an assistant prosecutor in Atlantic County between 1977 and 2004.

Ms. Curcio is also a member of the Supreme Court Committee on Character and the Protection Subcommittee of New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect.

Ms. Curcio is an active member of the Atlantic County community where she acts as a member of the board of trustees for the United Way. She is a graduate of Douglas College of Rutgers University and the Delaware Law School of Widener University.

Special Investigator David Santiago

David Santiago, retired November 1, 2005, from the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office, after serving over 25 years in law enforcement. Santiago came to the prosecutor's office in November 1989, after having worked with the City of Vineland Police Department since April, 1980. In Vineland Santiago worked in patrols, county narcotics, special operations and the detective bureau. While at the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office, Santiago was assigned to the Child Abuse and the Official Corruption Unit, where he had been a Sergeant in charge of the unit. The Official Corruption Unit is charged with the responsibility of investigating crimes and administrative violations committed by local government employees and appointed political officials in Atlantic County. Santiago retired from the Major Crimes Unit, as a Lieutenant, which is responsible for investigating homicides, suspicious deaths and police involved shootings.

Special Investigator Barry D. Wythe

Barry D. Wythe retired from law enforcement July 1, 2005 after serving 26 years,

twelve with the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office and fourteen Egg Harbor Township Police Department. During his career with the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office, he served as the commander of the Special Prosecution Section, as a Lieutenant of County Investigator's, overseeing the Fatal Collisions Investigations, Crimes Against Children and Sex Crimes Units. During his tenure with the Egg Harbor Township Police Department, he served as the Traffic Coordinator, responsible for the daily operations of all traffic related activities, management of grants, funds and selective enforcement details.

Mr. Wythe was the project director of several selective enforcement grants from New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety, including Driving While Intoxicated / Traffic Education & Enforcement Project that managed more than forty checkpoints for four consecutive years.

Additionally, Mr. Wythe served as Chairperson of the New Jersey Prosecutor's Fatal Collision Unit Association and the South Jersey Traffic Safety Alliance.