

From: [Charles Blackwell](#)
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Subject: Re: Conflict of Interest: David Jones
Date: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 8:00:48 AM

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GLWA Board Members and CEO Suzanne Coffey:

Pursuant to my rights under the First Amendment Petition Clause, I am following up on a troubling ethical concern involving GLWA General Counsel David Jones and his direct connection to Schenk & Bruetsch PLLC, the law firm currently handling GLWA litigation.

This situation raises serious concerns regarding potential conflicts of interest and the proper stewardship of public funds. Accordingly, I respectfully request that the Board:

1. Investigate whether Mr. Jones's actions in directing or approving litigation assignments to Schenk & Bruetsch PLLC comply with the Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct, the Michigan Public Officers and Employees Ethics Act, and GLWA's internal ethics and procurement policies;
2. Disclose publicly the full scope of GLWA's current and past financial engagements with Schenk & Bruetsch PLLC during Mr. Jones's tenure as General Counsel; and
3. Implement safeguards to ensure that the assignment of outside legal work is conducted through a transparent, competitive, and impartial process that avoids even the appearance of impropriety.

The public must have full confidence that GLWA's legal operations are free from conflicts of interest and that taxpayer resources are not being steered in ways that compromise integrity. This matter is not only about legal compliance but also about preserving the credibility and trustworthiness of GLWA as a public institution.

I respectfully request a written response from the Board outlining the steps you intend to take in response to these concerns.

Sincerely,

Charles Blackwell

On Mon, Sep 22, 2025 at 11:09 AM Charles Blackwell <cblack618@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Members of the GLWA Board:

Pursuant to my rights under the First Amendment Petition Clause, I am submitting this communication to bring to your attention a matter of public concern regarding a potential conflict of interest within GLWA's legal operations.

It has come to my attention that Mr. David Jones, GLWA's General Counsel, was formerly employed by Schenk & Bruetsch PLLC. Despite this prior employment, Mr. Jones, in his capacity as GLWA's chief legal officer, appears to be directing or approving GLWA-related litigation to Schenk & Bruetsch PLLC.

This arrangement raises serious questions under:

- Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct, including Rule 1.11 (Special Conflicts of Interest for Former and Current Government Officers and Employees);
- Michigan Public Officers and Employees Ethics Act (MCL 15.341 et seq.); and
- GLWA's own ethics and procurement policies.

In substance, Mr. Jones may be helping his former law firm receive additional public funds through GLWA litigation, which undermines public trust and potentially violates applicable ethics rules.