- 1			
1	Tracy L. Chase, Esq. Nevada Bar No. 2752	REC'D & FILEU	
2	704 W. Nye Lane, Suite 204	2015 OCT 29 PM 3: 32	
3	Carson City, Nevada 89703 Tel: (775) 687-5469 Fax: (775) 687-1279	SUSAN MERRIWETHER	
4	E-mail: tchase@ethics.nv.gov Attorney for the Respondent	Electronically Fill Nov 04 2015 09:	ed 25 a m
5	Auorney for the Respondent	Tracie K. Linden	nan
6	IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COU IN AND FOR CARS	RT OF THE STATE OF NEVADAPREM	e Court
7	Decided 8 27 50 9666 8 50 M 2607 807 80	,on cirr	
8	IRA HANSEN, in his official capacity as Nevada State Assemblyman for Assembly District No. 32; And JIM WHEELER, in his official capacity as	9	
9	Nevada State Assemblyman for Assembly District No. 39.	}	
10	Petitioners,	Case No. 150C000761B	
11	VS.	Dept. No. II	
12	THE COMMISSION ON ETHICS OF THE STATE OF NEVADA,	3 550	
13	Respondent.		(4)
14		*	
15	NOTICE OF AI	PPEAL	180
16	Notice is hereby given that The Commis	sion on Ethics of the State of Nevada,	
17	Respondent above named, hereby appeals to the Su	preme Court of State of Nevada from the	
18	Court's Order Denying Motion to Dismiss and Gr	canting Respondent's Petition for Judicial	
19	Review, entered in this action on the 1st day of Octo	ber, 2015.	
20	Submitted this 29 th day of October, 2015.	951	
21	Respec	tfully,	
22		DA COMMISSION ON ETHICS	
23		acy of. Chance	
24	Commi	c. Chase, Esq. ssion Counsel	
25	Nevada	a Bar No. 2752 a Commission on Ethics	
26	Carson	Nye Lane, Suite 204 City, Nevada 89703	
27 28	Fax: (7	one: (775) 687-5469 75) 687-1279 : tchase@ethics.nv.gov	
20		ey for Respondent	

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Pursuant to NRCP 5(b), I hereby certify that I am an employee of the Nevada Commission on Ethics and that on this day I served a true and correct copy of the attached **NOTICE OF APPEAL** via email, addressed as follows:

Brenda J. Erdoes, Esq.
Legislative Counsel
Kevin C. Powers, Esq.
Chief Litigation Counsel
Eileen G. O'Grady, Esq.
Chief Deputy Legislative Counsel
Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau,
Legal Division
401 S. Carson Street
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Email: erdoes@lcb.state.nv.us

Email: kpowers@lcb.state.nv.us

Email: ogrady@lcb.state.nv.us

Attorneys for Petitioners Ira Hansen and Jim Wheeler

Yvonne Nevarez-Goodson, Esq. Executive Director Nevada Commission on Ethics 704 W. Nye Lane, Suite 204 Carson City, Nevada 89703

Email: ynevarez@ethics.nv.gov

Dated: 10/29/15

Employee, Nevada Commission on Ethics

Page 2 of 2

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1	Tracy L. Chase, Esq. Nevada Bar No. 2752 REC'D & FILE
2	704 W. Nye Lane, Suite 204 2015 0CT 29 DH 22.
3	Tel: (775) 687-5469 SUSAN NORTHER
4	Fax: (775) 687-1279 E-mail: tchase@ethics.nv.gov
5	Attorney for the Respondent DEPUT
6	IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA IN AND FOR CARSON CITY
7	
8	IRA HANSEN, in his official capacity as Nevada State Assemblyman for Assembly District No. 32; And JIM WHEELER, in his official capacity as
9	Nevada State Assemblyman for Assembly District) No. 39,
10	Petitioners,) Case No. 150C000761B
11) Dept. No. II
12	THE COMMISSION ON ETHICS OF THE) STATE OF NEVADA,
13	Respondent.
14	
15	CASE APPEAL STATEMENT
16	1. Name of Appellant filing this case appeal statement:
17	The Commission on Ethics of the State of Nevada.
18	2. Identify the judge issuing the decision, judgment, or order appealed from:
19	The Honorable James E. Wilson Jr., First Judicial District Court of the State of Nevada.
20	Order entered on October 1, 2015, in Case No. 15OC000761B.
21	3. Identify each appellant and the name and address of counsel for each appellant:
22	The Nevada Commission on Ethics.
23	Counsel:
24	Tracy L. Chase, Esq. (NV Bar # 2752)
25	Commission Counsel Nevada Commission on Ethics
26	704 W. Nye Lane, Suite 204 Carson City, Nevada 89703
27	Telephone: 775-687-5469
28	Fax: 775-687-1279 Email: tchase@ethics.nv.gov

Petition for Writ of Certiorari, Review or Prohibition Pursuant to Article 6, Section 6 of Nevada Constitution and NRS Chapter 34 with the First Judicial District Court on April 2, 2015.

9. Provide a brief description of the nature of the action and result in the district court, including the type of judgment or order being appealed and the relief granted by the district court:

The nature of the action before the district court was a Petition for Judicial Review instituted pursuant to the provisions of NRS Chapter 233B, Nevada's Administrative Procedure Act, which sought review of a preliminary Order on Review of Jurisdictional Determination ("Order") issued the Nevada Ethics Commission ("Commission") denying a Motion to Dismiss filed by Petitioners who were defending a third-party complaint alleging various violations of NRS Chapter 281A, Nevada Ethics in Government Law. Petitioners' Motion to Dismiss sought immediate application of legislative privilege, as defined in NRS 41.071 and applicable case law, contending that legislative immunity is absolute and precluded any jurisdictional fact finding by the Commission, which contention was contested. In part, the Commission's denial was premised upon the Commission's fulfillment of its statutory duties to investigate the legitimacy of each Petitioner's conduct claimed to be legislative acts, within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity, for purposes of application of the law associated with legislative privilege and immunity.

Complicating the judicial review proceedings was the adoption of amendments to NRS 41.071, pursuant to Assembly Bill 496, introduced on the last day of the 2015 Legislative Session as an emergency measure, expanding legislative immunity protections in Nevada. The new law includes provisions of retroactive application to pending administrative matters and was introduced and enacted after entry the Commission's Order and after the filing of the judicial review in District Court.

The District Court considered several pleadings filed by the parties and concluded all matters through the issuance of an Order Denying Motion to Dismiss and Granting Petition for Judicial Review. In rendering its decision, the District Court applied the new law to factually

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establish that the conduct of each of the Petitioners was within the scope of legitimate legislative activity and therefore protected, while contemporaneously indicating that the Commission and its personnel properly performed their statutory duties expressly confirming that there was no prejudice to the substantial rights of Petitioners under any of the grounds stated in NRS 233B.135(3), which statute establishes the required standards to overturn a final decision of an administrative agency.

Specifically, the District Court ordered the Commission to terminate its underlying administrative proceedings granting relief as follows: (1) the Commission's Motion to Dismiss was denied; (2) Petitioners Petition for Judicial Review Pursuant to Nevada Administrative Procedure Act and Nevada Ethics in Government Law was granted; (3) Petitioner's Petition and Application for Writ of Certiorari, Review or Prohibition Pursuant to Artic 6, Section 6 of Nevada Constitution and NRS Chapter 34 was denied; and (4) all other requests for relief were determined to be moot.

10. Indicate whether the case has previously been the subject of an appeal to or original writ proceeding in the Supreme Court and, if so, the caption and Supreme Court docket number of the prior proceeding:

The case has not been the subject of an appeal or an original writ proceeding in the Supreme Court.

11. Indicate whether this appeal involves child custody or visitation:

Not applicable.

12. If this is a civil case, indicate whether this appeal involves the possibility of settlement:

The case has the possibility of settlement if such settlement includes compliance with

1	the provisions of NRS Chapter 233B and confirms the authority of the Ethics Commission to				
2	perform jurisdictional fact finding to accomplish its jurisdictional review.				
3	Submitted this 29 th day of October, 2015.				
4	Respectfully,				
5	NEVADA COMMISSION ON ETHICS				
6	hasy R. Chase				
7	Tracy L. Chase, Esq. Commission Counsel				
8	Nevada Bar No. 2752 Nevada Commission on Ethics				
9	704 W. Nye Lane, Suite 204 Carson City, Nevada 89703				
10	704 W. Nye Lane, Suite 204 Carson City, Nevada 89703 Telephone: (775) 687-5469 E-mail: tchase@ethics.nv.gov				
11	Attorneys for Respondent				
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE 1 Pursuant to NRCP 5(b), I hereby certify that I am an employee of the Nevada 2 Commission on Ethics and that on this day I served a true and correct copy of the attached 3 CASE APPEAL STATEMENT via email, addressed as follows: 4 Email: erdoes@lcb.state.nv.us 5 Brenda J. Erdoes, Esq. Legislative Counsel Email: kpowers@lcb.state.nv.us 6 Kevin C. Powers, Esq. Chief Litigation Counsel 7 Email: ogrady@lcb.state.nv.us Eileen G. O'Grady, Esq. Chief Deputy Legislative Counsel 8 Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau, Legal Division 9 401 S. Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701 10 Attorneys for Petitioners 11 Ira Hansen and Jim Wheeler 12 Email: ynevarez@ehtics.nv.gov Yvonne Nevarez-Goodson, Esq. **Executive Director** 13 Nevada Commission on Ethics 704 W. Nye Lane, Suite 204 14 Carson City, Nevada 89703 15 16 Dated: 10/29/15 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

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Date: 11/02/2015 MIJR5925	09:03:25.7	Docket Sheet	Page: 1
Judge: WILSON JR,	JAMES E	Case No. Ticket No. CTN:	15 OC 00076 1B

HANSEN, IRA et al

By:

COMMISSION ON ETHICS OF THE STATE OF NEVADA

DRSPND

By: CHASE, TRACY L

704 W NYE LN STE 204 CARSON CITY, NV 89703

Lic:

Dob:

Sex: Sid:

Plate#:

Make: Year:

Accident:

Type: Venue: Location:

HANSEN, IRA WHEELER, JIM Bond: PLNTPET Type:

Set: Posted:

HEELER, JIM PLNTPET

Charges:

Ct.

Offense Dt: Arrest Dt: Comments: Cvr:

Sent	encing:
17	m: 1 = 2

No.	Filed	Action	Operator	Fine/Cost	Due
1	10/29/15	CASE APPEAL STATEMENT	1BCCOOPER	0.00	0.00
2	10/29/15	NOTICE OF APPEAL	1BCCOOPER	24.00	0.00
3	10/26/15	NOTICE OF ENTRY OF ORDER DENYING MOTION TO DISMISS AND GRANTING PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW	1BCCOOPER	0.00	0.00
4	10/02/15	SUMMARY JUDGMENT	1BJULIEH	0.00	0.00
5	10/02/15	HEARING HELD: The following event: STATUS CHECK scheduled for 09/28/2015 at 3:30 pm has been resulted as follows:	1BJULIEH	0.00	0.00
		Result: HEARING HELD Judge: WILSON JR, JAMES E Location: DEPT II			
6	10/01/15	ORDER DENYING MOTION TO DISMISS AND GRANTING PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW	1BJULIEH	0.00	0.00
7	10/01/15	TRIAL DATE MEMO	1BJULIEH	0.00	0.00
8	09/28/15	PETITIONERS' REQUEST FOR SUBMISSION COUNTER-MOTION TO STRIKE IMPROPER EXHIBITS	1BCGRIBBLE	0.00	0.00
9	09/28/15	PETITIONERS' REPLY IN SUPPORT OF THEIR COUNTER-MOTION TO STRIKE IMPROPER EXHIBITS AND PETITIONERS' OPPOSITION TO RESPONDENT'S APPLICATION FOR LEAVE TO PRESENT ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE TO THE COMMISSION PURSUANT TO NRS 233B.131	1BCGRIBBLE	0.00	0.00
10	09/23/15	REQUEST FOR SUBMISSION	1BVANESSA	0.00	0.00
11	09/23/15	REPLY IN SUPPORT OF MOTION TO CONITNUE HEARING SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 29, 2015	1BVANESSA	0.00	0.00

No.	Filed	Action	Operator	Fine/Cost	Due
12	09/23/15	OPPOSITION TO PETITIONERS' COUNTER-MOTION TO STRIKE IMPROPER EXHIBITS FROM RESPONDENT'S ANSWERING BRIEF AND REPLY IN SUPPORT OF MOTION TO DISMISS AND APPLICATION FOR LEAVE TO PRESENT ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE TO THE COMMISSION PURSUANT TO NRS 233B.131	1BVANESSA	0.00	0.00
13	09/21/15	PETITIONERS' REPLY IN SUPPORT OF THEIR REQUEST FOR THE COURT TO TAKE ORAL ARGUMENT ON RESPONDENT'S MOTION TO DISMISS AT THE HEARING ALREADY SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 29, 2015 AND PETITIONERS' OPPOSITION TO RESPONDENT'S MOTION TO CONTINUE THE HEARING SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 29, 2015	1BCGRIBBLE	0,00	0.00
14	09/15/15	REQUEST FOR SUBMISSION	1BCGRIBBLE	0.00	0.00
15	09/15/15	OBJECTION TO PETITIONERS' REQUEST FOR THE COURT TO TAKE ORAL AGRUMENT ON RESPONDENT'S MOTION TO DISMISS AT THE HEARING ALREADY SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 29, 2015 AND	1BCGRIBBLE	0.00	0.00
		MOTION TO CONTINUE HEARING SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 29, 2015 AND EXPARTE REQUEST FOR ORDER SHORTENING TIME TO RESPOND TO MOITION TO CONTINUE			
16	09/11/15	STIPULATION AND ORDER TO EXTEND TIME TO FILE PETITIONERS' REPLY BRIEF ON PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW	1BJULIEH	0.00	0.00
17	09/08/15	REQUEST TO SUBMIT STIPULATION AND ORDER TO EXTEND TIME	1BJHIGGINS	0.00	0.00
18	09/08/15	PETITIONERS' COUNTER-MOTION TO STRIKE IMPROPER EXHIBITS FROM RESPONDENT'S ANSWERING BRIEF AND REPLY IN SUPPORT OF MOTION TO DISMISS	1BJHIGGINS	0.00	0.00
19	09/08/15	PETITIONERS' REPLY BRIEF ON PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW	1BJHIGGINS	0.00	0.00
20	08/31/15	PETITIONERS' REQUEST FOR THE COURT TO TAKE ORAL ARGUMENT ON RESPONDENT'S MOTION TO DISMISS AT THE HEARING ALREADY SCHEDULED IN THIS CASE FOR SEPTEMBER 29, 2015 BY STIPULATION AND ORDER	1BJHIGGINS	0.00	0.00
21	08/27/15	REQUEST FOR SUBMISSION	1BJULIEH	0,00	0.00
22	08/27/15	REPLY IN SUPPORT OF MOTION TO DISMISS	1BJULIEH	0.00	0.00
23	08/27/15	RESPONDENT'S ANSWER BRIEF	1BJULIEH	0.00	0.00
24	08/17/15	FILE RETURNED AFTER SUBMISSION - ORDER ENTERED	1BVANESSA	0.00	0.00
25	08/17/15	STIPULATION AND ORDER TO EXTEND TIME TO FILE RESPONDENT'S ANSWERING BRIEF AND REPLY IN SUPPORT OF MOTION TO DISMISS	1BVANESSA	0.00	0.00

No.	Filed	Action	Operator	Fine/Cost	Due
26	07/20/15	PETITIONERS OPPOSITION TO MOTION TO DISMISS	1BCCOOPER	0.00	0.00
27	07/13/15	PETITIONERS OPENING BRIEF ON PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW	1BCGRIBBLE 0.00		0.00
28	06/30/15	MOTION TO DISMISS	1BJULIEH	0.00	0.00
29	05/14/15	RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS UNDER REVIEW AND NOTICE OF TRANSMITTAL OF CERTIFIED RECORD	1BVANESSA 0.00		0.00
30	05/14/15	CERTIFIED RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS	1BVANESSA	0.00	0.00
31	04/30/15	FILE RETURNED AFTER SUBMISSION - ORDER ENTERED	1BJULIEH	0.00	0.00
32	04/30/15	STIPULATION AND ORDER	1BJULIEH	0.00	0.00
33	04/22/15	REQUEST TO SUBMIT STIPULATON AND ORDER	1BJULIEH	0.00	0.00
34	04/22/15	AFFIDAVIT OF PROOF OF SERVICE OF PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REIVEW AND PETITION AND APPLICATION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI, REVIEW OR PROHIBITION	1BJULIEH 0.00		0.00
35	04/22/15	DEFENDANT'S/RESPONDENT'S INITIAL APPEARANCE AFFIRMATION PURSUANT TO NRS 239.030	1BJULIEH 0.00		0.00
36	04/22/15	STATEMENT OF INTENT TO PARTICIPATE IN JUDICIAL REVIEW	1BJULIEH 0.00		0.00
37	04/06/15	HEARING HELD: The following event: PETITION HEARING scheduled for 04/03/2015 at 3:30 pm has been resulted as follows: Result: HEARING HELD	1BJULIEH	0.00	0.00
		Judge: WILSON JR, JAMES E Location: DEPT II			
38	04/03/15	TRIAL DATE MEMO	1BJULIEH	0.00	0.00
39	04/02/15	ISSUING SUMMONS	1BCGRIBBLE	0.00	0.00
40	04/02/15	PETITIONERS' EMERGENCY MOTION FOR A PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION AND A STAY ENJOINING THE COMMISSION ON ETHICS FROM CONDUCTING ANY FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS AND PROCEEDINGS IN REQUEST FOR OPINION NO. 14-21C AND REQUEST FOR OPINION NO. 14-22C PENDING JUDICIAL REVIEW	1BCGRIBBLE	0.00	0.00
41	04/02/15	PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW PURSUANT TO NEVADA ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE ACT AND NEVADA ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT LAW	1BCGRIBBLE	265.00	0.00
		OR IN THE ALTERNATIVE PETITION AND APPLICATION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI, REVIEW OR POHIBITION PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 6, SECTION 6 OF NEVADA CONSTITUTION AND NRS CHAPTER 34			
			Total:	289.00	0.00
=		Totals By: COST		289.00	0.00

Date: 11/02/2015 09:03:25.8 MIJR5925

Docket Sheet

Page: 4

INFORMATION
*** End of Report ***

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2015 OCT -1 PM 3:58

SUSAN MERRIWETHER / CLERK

BY DEPLITY

IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA IN AND FOR CARSON CITY

IRA HANSEN, in his official capacity as Nevada State Assemblyman for Assembly District No. 32; and JIM WHEELER, in his official capacity as Nevada State Assemblyman for Assembly District No. 39,

Petitioners,

VS.

THE COMMISSION ON ETHICS OF THE STATE OF NEVADA

Respondent.

CASE NO. 15 OC 00076 1B

DEPT. 2

ORDER DENYING MOTION TO DISMISS AND GRANTING PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

An individual filed two Third-Party Request for Opinion (RFO) forms with the Commission on Ethics of the State of Nevada (the Commission) seeking review of certain actions of Assemblymen Ira Hansen (Hansen) and Jim Wheeler (Wheeler) (collectively, Petitioners). The Commission's executive director and its counsel completed a jurisdictional determination for each RFO and concluded the Commission had jurisdiction to investigate.

The parties entered into a Stipulation and Order Concerning Review of Jurisdictional Determination, which provided Petitioners with an opportunity for the Commission to consider a Pre-Panel Motion to Dismiss along with the related record. The Commission held a hearing on the Pre-Panel Motion to Dismiss and then

entered an Order on Review of Jurisdictional Determination. The order denied Petitioners' Motion to Dismiss and ordered the Commission's executive director to undertake an investigation to determine whether Petitioners' conduct properly falls within the scope of legitimate legislative activity and/or conduct related to the representation of the interests of their constituents that is privileged and immune from review under NRS 281A.020(2)(d) and NRS 41.071.

Petitioners filed a Petition for judicial review, or in the alternative, a petition for writ relief. Petitioners requested the court set aside the Commission's Order on Review of Jurisdictional Determination. The Commission filed a motion to dismiss the petition for judicial review and the petition for writ relief.

The Legislature passed AB496 which, among other things, broadly describes acts that are covered by legislative privilege and immunity. The Commission in its Reply in Support of Motion to Dismiss argued AB496 is unconstitutionally vague and over broad, and violates the separation of powers doctrine.

FACTS

The record contains evidence of the following facts which are stated in chronological order.

Hansen had a dispute with a Nevada Department of Wildlife officer regarding whether Hansen illegally placed snare traps too near a roadway. Hansen contacted Legislative Counsel and requested a legal opinion regarding the snare trap statute, NRS 503.580. Legislative Counsel told Hansen it could look like a potential conflict of interest if he requested the opinion so he should ask a colleague to request the opinion.

Hansen asked Wheeler to request the opinion. Wheeler requested Legislative Counsel for an opinion as to whether the prohibition against placing or setting a steel trap within 200 feet of a public road or highway applies to box traps and snare traps.

Hansen was charged under NRS 503.580 with four misdemeanor counts for unlawfully setting traps. Legislative Counsel issued an opinion in response to Wheeler's request. The Legislative Counsel's opinion contains a statutory construction analysis of NRS 503.580 and concluded NRS 503.580 does not apply to snare traps. Hansen told a reporter, among other things, "I will be found not guilty because when you see what the LCB says and when you read the law, you will see that I was in compliance."

Petitioners requested BDRs regarding trapping. Wheeler requested BDR31 which was introduced as AB335. AB335 proposed an amendment to NRS 503.580. The Legislature did not pass AB335.

ISSUES

Does this court have jurisdiction to conduct a judicial review under the Administrative Procedures Act (APA)?

If the court has jurisdiction under the APA, did the Commission commit prejudicial error as a matter of law by denying Petitioners' motion to dismiss for lack of subject matter jurisdiction?

If the court does not have jurisdiction under the APA, is writ relief appropriate?

ANALYSIS

The Commission argued the petition for judicial review should be dismissed because: 1) judicial review is not available to Petitioners under NRS Chapter 233B because a) the Commission's Order on Review of Jurisdictional Determination is not a final order and Petitioners have not exhausted their administrative remedies; and 2) Petitioners have an adequate remedy at law.

Petitioners argued they are entitled to immediate judicial review. Petitioners' argument is, first, they are entitled to legislative privilege and immunity because

their acts at issue were within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity. Legislative privilege and immunity protect legislators from the burden of defending themselves as well as from the consequences of litigation results.¹ Second, if judicial review is not granted now, Petitioners will lose the legislative privilege and immunity protection from having to defend themselves in the Commission's administrative investigation and proceedings. Third, review of a final Commission decision, one made after further investigation, will not provide an adequate remedy because Petitioners will have to defend themselves in the Commission's investigation and will therefore be deprived of the protection of not having to defend themselves. Fourth, Petitioners cite NRS 233B.130(1) which states: "Any preliminary, procedural or intermediate act or ruling by an agency in a contested case is reviewable if review of the final decision of the agency would not provide an adequate remedy." And fifth, because review of a final decision of the Commission would not provide an adequate remedy at law they are entitled to judicial review now.

To resolve the issue of whether Petitioners are entitled to judicial review, the court must resolve the issue of whether Petitioners' acts are protected by legislative privilege and immunity. Petitioners are protected by legislative privilege and immunity if their questioned acts fall "within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity." On the issue of whether Petitioners' questioned acts fall within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity, the court also considered the parties' briefs filed in support of and opposing the Petition for Judicial Review.

The Commission took the position that Petitioners' request to Legislative Counsel for the opinion was to serve Petitioners' private, personal interests. Specifically, the Commission argued Petitioners requested the opinion so Hansen could use it as a defense in his criminal case. The Commission argued Petitioners' acts did not fall within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity.

¹Dombrowski v. Eastland, 387 U.S. 82, 85, 87 S. Ct. 1425, 18 L. Ed. 2d 577 (1967) (Internal citation and quotation marks omitted.)

Petitioners countered with several arguments, including an argument based upon NRS 41.071 as amended by AB496 during the 2015 Legislature. The NRS 41.071 argument is dispositive on the "sphere of legitimate legislative activity" issue.

AB496, section 3, paragraph 5 provides legislative privilege and immunity to legislators for (a) "Any actions, in any form, taken or performed with regard to any legislative measure or other matter within the jurisdiction of the Legislature ...;" © Any actions, in any form, taken or performed with regard to requesting, seeking or obtaining any form of aid, assistance, counsel or services from any officer or employee of the Legislature concerning any legislative matter or other matter within the jurisdiction of the Legislature" Both subsections include a non-exhaustive list of examples of acts that fall "within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity." The Legislature declared in AB496 that the amendments to NRS 41.071 were a legislative pronouncement of already existing law intended to clarify rather than change existing law and apply to pending administrative or judicial proceedings. The Legislature also made the amendment effective upon passage and approval.

The Commission argued AB496 is unconstitutionally vague and over broad, and violates the separation of powers doctrine. The Commission cited no persuasive authority to support these arguments. The Commission did not show that AB496 is unconstitutionally vague or over broad as applied to Petitioners' case. Neither did the Commission show that AB496 impedes the authority of the judiciary to interpret and apply legal precedent.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Hansen through Wheeler requested Legislative Counsel provide an opinion interpreting a state trapping law. The Legislature has jurisdiction over trapping laws. Therefore, under AB496, as a matter of law, Petitioners' actions are within the sphere of legislative activity and protected by legislative privilege and immunity.

The Commission failed to show that AB496 is unconstitutionally vague or over broad, or violates the separation of powers doctrine.

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Because Petitioners acts fall within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity as defined in AB496, they are entitled to legislative privilege and immunity. If judicial review is not granted now, Petitioners will lose the legislative privilege and immunity protection from having to defend themselves in the Commission's administrative investigation and proceedings. Review of a final Commission decision, one made after further investigation, will not provide an adequate remedy because Petitioners will have to defend themselves in the Commission's investigation and will therefore be deprived of the protection of not having to defend themselves. Therefore, under NRS 233B.130(1) this court has jurisdiction to conduct a judicial review and the Commission's Motion to Dismiss must be denied. For the same reasons, Petitioners' petition for judicial review must be granted.

The court does not conclude that substantial rights of Petitioners were prejudiced by the Commission under any of the grounds stated in NRS 233B.135(3). The Commission's personnel performed their duties under NRS 281A.240(1)©, NRS 281A.280(1), NRS 281A.440(3) and (4), and NAC 281A.405(1). They investigated the facts and circumstances related to the RFOs to determine whether there was just and sufficient cause for the Commission to render an opinion in the matter, and made a recommendation that the Commission did have jurisdiction to investigate and take appropriate action. The Commission held a pre-panel hearing under NAC 281A.405(4). The Commission did not render a final decision. The issue of whether Petitioners' acts were within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity was unclear during the time the matter was before the Commission. After Petitioners filed their petition for judicial review, the Legislature made clear, through AB496, that Petitioners' acts were within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity. At that point, the matter was before this court and out of the Commission's hands. The Commission discharged its duties responsibly and reasonably.

Because Petitioners' acts were within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity, the Nevada Assembly has sole jurisdiction to question and sanction

Petitioners regarding those acts. Therefore, the Commission must terminate its proceedings in this matter.

Because Petitioners' petition for judicial review is granted, the other issues raised by the parties in their pleadings and papers are moot and therefore denied.

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED:

The Commission's Motion to Dismiss is denied.

Petitioners' Petition for Judicial Review Pursuant to Nevada Administrative Procedure Act and Nevada Ethics in Government Law is granted.

Petitioners' Petition and Application for Writ of Certiorari, Review or Prohibition Pursuant to Article 6, Section 6 of Nevada Constitution and NRS Chapter 34 is denied.

The Commission terminate its proceedings in this matter.

Other requests for relief are moot and therefore denied.

October 1, 2015

James E. Wilso District Judge

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Pursuant to NRCP 5(b), I certify that I am an employee of the First Judicial District Court, and I certify that on this ____ day of October, 2015, I deposited for mailing at Carson City, Nevada, or caused to be delivered by messenger service, a true and correct copy of the foregoing Order and addressed to the following:

Kevin Powers, Esq. 401 S. Carson Street Carson City, NV 89701

Tracy Chase, Esq. 704 West Nye Lane, Suite 204 Carson City, NV 89706

Judicial Assistant

-8-

		DEOLD & EU EG
1	BRENDA J. ERDOES, Legislative Counsel	REC'D & FILED
	Nevada Bar No. 3644	2015 OCT 26 AM 9: 17
2	KEVIN C. POWERS, Chief Litigation Counsel Nevada Bar No. 6781	SUSAH MERRIWETHER
3	EILEEN G. O'GRADY, Chief Deputy Legislative Con	
	Nevada Bar No. 5443	BY DEPUTY
4	LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU, LEGAL DIVISION	
5	401 S. Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701	
	Tel: (775) 684-6830; Fax: (775) 684-6761	
6	E-mail: kpowers@lcb.state.nv.us; ogrady@lcb.state	.nv.us
7	Attorneys for Petitioners	
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8	IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT CO	
9	IN AND FOR CA	ARSON CITY
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10	IRA HANSEN, in his official capacity as Nevada	
	State Assemblyman for Assembly	Case No. 15 OC 00076 1B
11	District No. 32; and JIM WHEELER, in his official capacity as Nevada State Assemblyman	Dept. No. II
12	for Assembly District No. 39,	2 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
1.2	Petitioners,	
13	remoners,	
14	vs.	
1.0	THE COMMISSION ON ETHICS OF THE	
15	STATE OF NEVADA,	ORIGINAL
16		VIIIUIIVAE
	Respondent.	
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18	NOTICE OF ENTRY OF ORDER I	
	AND GRANTING PETITION	FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW
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20	PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on the1st	day of October, 2015, the Court in the above-
21	titled action entered an Order Denying Motion to Dis	miss and Granting Petition for Judicial Review. A
22	copy of the Order is attached hereto as Exhibit 1.	
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This 26th day of October, 2015. DATED: 1 Respectfully submitted, 2 **BRENDA J. ERDOES** 3 Legislative Counsel 4 5 By: KEVIN C. POWERS, Chief Litigation Counsel Nevada Bar No. 6781 6 EILEEN G. O'GRADY, Chief Deputy Legislative Counsel Nevada Bar No. 5443 7 LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU, LEGAL DIVISION 401 S. Carson Street 8 Carson City, Nevada 89701 Tel: (775) 684-6830; Fax: (775) 684-6761 9 Attorneys for the Petitioners 10 CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE 11 I hereby certify that I am an employee of the Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau, Legal Division, 12 and that on the 26th day of October, 2015, pursuant to NRCP 5(b) and the parties' stipulation and 13 consent to service by electronic mail, I served a true and correct copy of Notice of Entry of Order 14 Denying Motion to Dismiss and Granting Petition for Judicial Review, by electronic mail, addressed to 15 the following: 16 Tracy L. Chase, Esq. 17 Commission Counsel NEVADA COMMISSION ON ETHICS 18 704 W. Nye Lane, Suite 204 Carson City, NV 89703 19 E-mail: tchase@ethics.nv.gov Attorney for Respondent 20 21 An Employee of the Legislative Counsel Bureau 22

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Exhibit 1

Exhibit 1

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REC'D & FILED

SUSAN MERRIMETHER CLERK

IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA IN AND FOR CARSON CITY

IRA HANSEN, in his official capacity as Nevada State Assemblyman for Assembly District No. 32; and JIM WHEELER, in his official capacity as Nevada State Assemblyman for Assembly District No. 39,

Petitioners,

VS.

THE COMMISSION ON ETHICS OF THE STATE OF NEVADA

Respondent.

CASE NO.

15 OC 00076 1B

DEPT. 2

ORDER DENYING MOTION TO DISMISS AND GRANTING PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

An individual filed two Third-Party Request for Opinion (RFO) forms with the Commission on Ethics of the State of Nevada (the Commission) seeking review of certain actions of Assemblymen Ira Hansen (Hansen) and Jim Wheeler (Wheeler) (collectively, Petitioners). The Commission's executive director and its counsel completed a jurisdictional determination for each RFO and concluded the Commission had jurisdiction to investigate.

The parties entered into a Stipulation and Order Concerning Review of Jurisdictional Determination, which provided Petitioners with an opportunity for the Commission to consider a Pre-Panel Motion to Dismiss along with the related record. The Commission held a hearing on the Pre-Panel Motion to Dismiss and then

 entered an Order on Review of Jurisdictional Determination. The order denied Petitioners' Motion to Dismiss and ordered the Commission's executive director to undertake an investigation to determine whether Petitioners' conduct properly falls within the scope of legitimate legislative activity and/or conduct related to the representation of the interests of their constituents that is privileged and immune from review under NRS 281A.020(2)(d) and NRS 41.071.

Petitioners filed a Petition for judicial review, or in the alternative, a petition for writ relief. Petitioners requested the court set aside the Commission's Order on Review of Jurisdictional Determination. The Commission filed a motion to dismiss the petition for judicial review and the petition for writ relief.

The Legislature passed AB496 which, among other things, broadly describes acts that are covered by legislative privilege and immunity. The Commission in its Reply in Support of Motion to Dismiss argued AB496 is unconstitutionally vague and over broad, and violates the separation of powers doctrine.

FACTS

The record contains evidence of the following facts which are stated in chronological order.

Hansen had a dispute with a Nevada Department of Wildlife officer regarding whether Hansen illegally placed snare traps too near a roadway. Hansen contacted Legislative Counsel and requested a legal opinion regarding the snare trap statute, NRS 503.580. Legislative Counsel told Hansen it could look like a potential conflict of interest if he requested the opinion so he should ask a colleague to request the opinion.

Hansen asked Wheeler to request the opinion. Wheeler requested Legislative Counsel for an opinion as to whether the prohibition against placing or setting a steel trap within 200 feet of a public road or highway applies to box traps and snare traps.

Hansen was charged under NRS 503.580 with four misdemeanor counts for unlawfully setting traps. Legislative Counsel issued an opinion in response to Wheeler's request. The Legislative Counsel's opinion contains a statutory construction analysis of NRS 503.580 and concluded NRS 503.580 does not apply to snare traps. Hansen told a reporter, among other things, "I will be found not guilty because when you see what the LCB says and when you read the law, you will see that I was in compliance."

Petitioners requested BDRs regarding trapping. Wheeler requested BDR31 which was introduced as AB335. AB335 proposed an amendment to NRS 503.580. The Legislature did not pass AB335.

ISSUES

Does this court have jurisdiction to conduct a judicial review under the Administrative Procedures Act (APA)?

If the court has jurisdiction under the APA, did the Commission commit prejudicial error as a matter of law by denying Petitioners' motion to dismiss for lack of subject matter jurisdiction?

If the court does not have jurisdiction under the APA, is writ relief appropriate?

ANALYSIS

The Commission argued the petition for judicial review should be dismissed because: 1) judicial review is not available to Petitioners under NRS Chapter 233B because a) the Commission's Order on Review of Jurisdictional Determination is not a final order and Petitioners have not exhausted their administrative remedies; and 2) Petitioners have an adequate remedy at law.

Petitioners argued they are entitled to immediate judicial review. Petitioners' argument is, first, they are entitled to legislative privilege and immunity because

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24 25 26 their acts at issue were within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity. Legislative privilege and immunity protect legislators from the burden of defending themselves as well as from the consequences of litigation results. Second, if judicial review is not granted now, Petitioners will lose the legislative privilege and immunity protection from having to defend themselves in the Commission's administrative investigation and proceedings. Third, review of a final Commission decision, one made after further investigation, will not provide an adequate remedy because Petitioners will have to defend themselves in the Commission's investigation and will therefore be deprived of the protection of not having to defend themselves. Fourth, Petitioners cite NRS 233B.130(1) which states: "Any preliminary, procedural or intermediate act or ruling by an agency in a contested case is reviewable if review of the final decision of the agency would not provide an adequate remedy." And fifth, because review of a final decision of the Commission would not provide an adequate remedy at law they are entitled to judicial review now.

To resolve the issue of whether Petitioners are entitled to judicial review, the court must resolve the issue of whether Petitioners' acts are protected by legislative privilege and immunity. Petitioners are protected by legislative privilege and immunity if their questioned acts fall "within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity." On the issue of whether Petitioners' questioned acts fall within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity, the court also considered the parties' briefs filed in support of and opposing the Petition for Judicial Review.

The Commission took the position that Petitioners' request to Legislative Counsel for the opinion was to serve Petitioners' private, personal interests. Specifically, the Commission argued Petitioners requested the opinion so Hansen could use it as a defense in his criminal case. The Commission argued Petitioners' acts did not fall within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity.

¹Dombrowski v. Eastland, 387 U.S. 82, 85, 87 S. Ct. 1425, 18 L. Ed. 2d 577 (1967) (Internal citation and quotation marks omitted.)

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Petitioners countered with several arguments, including an argument based upon NRS 41.071 as amended by AB496 during the 2015 Legislature. The NRS 41.071 argument is dispositive on the "sphere of legitimate legislative activity" issue.

AB496, section 3, paragraph 5 provides legislative privilege and immunity to legislators for (a) "Any actions, in any form, taken or performed with regard to any legislative measure or other matter within the jurisdiction of the Legislature ...;" © Any actions, in any form, taken or performed with regard to requesting, seeking or obtaining any form of aid, assistance, counsel or services from any officer or employee of the Legislature concerning any legislative matter or other matter within the jurisdiction of the Legislature" Both subsections include a non-exhaustive list of examples of acts that fall "within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity." The Legislature declared in AB496 that the amendments to NRS 41.071 were a legislative pronouncement of already existing law intended to clarify rather than change existing law and apply to pending administrative or judicial proceedings. The Legislature also made the amendment effective upon passage and approval.

The Commission argued AB496 is unconstitutionally vague and over broad, and violates the separation of powers doctrine. The Commission cited no persuasive authority to support these arguments. The Commission did not show that AB496 is unconstitutionally vague or over broad as applied to Petitioners' case. Neither did the Commission show that AB496 impedes the authority of the judiciary to interpret and apply legal precedent.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Hansen through Wheeler requested Legislative Counsel provide an opinion interpreting a state trapping law. The Legislature has jurisdiction over trapping laws. Therefore, under AB496, as a matter of law, Petitioners' actions are within the sphere of legislative activity and protected by legislative privilege and immunity.

The Commission failed to show that AB496 is unconstitutionally vague or over broad, or violates the separation of powers doctrine.

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Because Petitioners acts fall within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity as defined in AB496, they are entitled to legislative privilege and immunity. If judicial review is not granted now, Petitioners will lose the legislative privilege and immunity protection from having to defend themselves in the Commission's administrative investigation and proceedings. Review of a final Commission decision, one made after further investigation, will not provide an adequate remedy because Petitioners will have to defend themselves in the Commission's investigation and will therefore be deprived of the protection of not having to defend themselves. Therefore, under NRS 233B.130(1) this court has jurisdiction to conduct a judicial review and the Commission's Motion to Dismiss must be denied. For the same reasons, Petitioners' petition for judicial review must be granted.

The court does not conclude that substantial rights of Petitioners were prejudiced by the Commission under any of the grounds stated in NRS 233B.135(3). The Commission's personnel performed their duties under NRS 281A.240(1)©, NRS 281A.280(1), NRS 281A.440(3) and (4), and NAC 281A.405(1). They investigated the facts and circumstances related to the RFOs to determine whether there was just and sufficient cause for the Commission to render an opinion in the matter, and made a recommendation that the Commission did have jurisdiction to investigate and take appropriate action. The Commission held a pre-panel hearing under NAC 281A.405(4). The Commission did not render a final decision. The issue of whether Petitioners' acts were within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity was unclear during the time the matter was before the Commission. After Petitioners filed their petition for judicial review, the Legislature made clear, through AB496, that Petitioners' acts were within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity. At that point, the matter was before this court and out of the Commission's hands. The Commission discharged its duties responsibly and reasonably.

Because Petitioners' acts were within the sphere of legitimate legislative activity, the Nevada Assembly has sole jurisdiction to question and sanction

Petitioners regarding those acts. Therefore, the Commission must terminate its proceedings in this matter.

Because Petitioners' petition for judicial review is granted, the other issues raised by the parties in their pleadings and papers are most and therefore denied.

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED:

The Commission's Motion to Dismiss is denied.

Petitioners' Petition for Judicial Review Pursuant to Nevada Administrative Procedure Act and Nevada Ethics in Government Law is granted.

Petitioners' Petition and Application for Writ of Certiorari, Review or Prohibition Pursuant to Article 6, Section 6 of Nevada Constitution and NRS Chapter 34 is denied.

The Commission terminate its proceedings in this matter.

Other requests for relief are moot and therefore denied.

October 1, 2015

James E. Wilso District Judge

FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT MINUTES

CASE NO. <u>15 OC 00076 1B</u>

TITLE:

IRA HANSON AND JIM WHEELER VS

COMMISSION ON ETHICS OF THE

STATE OF NEVADA

09/28/15 – DEPT. II – HONORABLE JAMES E. WILSON, JR. J. Harkleroad, Clerk – Not Reported

TELEPHONIC HEARING

Present: Kevin Powers, counsel for Pltf., appearing telephonically; Tracy Chase, counsel for Deft., appearing telephonically

Statements were made by Court.

COURT ORDERED: Oral Argument hearing set for September 29, 2015 is vacated.

The Court minutes as stated above are a summary of the proceeding and are not a verbatim record. The hearing held on the above date was recorded on the Court's recording system.

FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT MINUTES

CASE NO. <u>15 OC 00076</u> 1B

TITLE:

IRA HANSEN, IN HIS OFFICIAL

CAPACITY AS NEVADA STATE ASSEMBLYMAN FOR ASSEMBLY

DISTRICT NO. 32; AND JIM WHEELER,

IN HIS OFFICIAL CAPACITY AS

NEVADA STATE ASSEMBLYMAN FOR ASSEMBLY DISTRICT NO. 39 VS THE

COMMISSION ON ETHICS OF THE

STATE OF NEVADA

04/06/15 – DEPT. II – HONORABLE JAMES E. WILSON, JR. J. Harkleroad, Clerk – Not Reported

TELEPHONE CONFERECE: PETITIONERS EMERGENCY MOTION FOR STAY

Present: KevinC. Powers and Brenda J. Erdoes counsel for petitioners; Tracy Chase, counsel for Ethics Commission.

Statements were made by Court and counsel.

COURT ORDERED: Counsel to contact the Court's Judicial Assistant to set the matter. Upon inquiry by Chase,

Powers indicated they are waiving the rights to confidentiality.

COURT ORDERED: Powers to prepare a brief order that indicates that a telephone conference was held that was recorded. That the Legislative Counsel does not have an objection to the Commission having time to filing a response and understands that Ms. Chase will be out of the office next week. That Mr. Hanson and Mr. Wheeler waive their confidentiality under 281A. Further statements were made by Powers and Court.

The Court minutes as stated above are a summary of the proceeding and are not a verbatim record. The hearing held on the above date was recorded on the Court's recording system.

DISTRICT COURT CIVIL COVER SHEET

Carson City County, Nevada					
Case No. 15000006113					
	(Assigned by Clerk's	s Office)	NEO DETILED		
I. Party Information (provide both hor	ne and mailing addresses if different)	D.C. J.	nt(s) (name/address/phone): 2015 APR -2 PM 4: 14		
Plaintiff(s) (name/address/phone):	- District 00	10.000 April 20.000 April 20.000	Portrained I provide de de compression de la compressión del compressión de la compr		
Ira Hansen, Nevada State Assemblyma		Commi	ssion on Ethics of the State of Nevada		
401 S. Carson Street, Carson City, NV		704 W.	Nye Lane, Suite 204, Carson City, NW 89703, CLERK		
Jim Wheeler, Nevada State Assemblyn		BYL DEPUT			
401 S. Carson Street, Carson City, NV	89701				
Attorney (name/address/phone):		Attorney (name/address/phone):			
Kevin C. Powers, Esq.			e M. Nevarez-Goodson, Esq.		
Legislative Counsel Bureau, Legal Divi			ive Director, Commission on Ethics		
401 S. Carson Street, Carson City, NV	89701	704 W.	Nye Lane, Suite 204, Carson City, NV 89703		
775-684-6830					
II. Nature of Controversy (please se	lect the one most applicable filing type	e below)			
Civil Case Filing Types			() () () () () () () () () ()		
Real Property			Torts Other Torts		
Landlord/Tenant	Negligence				
Unlawful Detainer	Auto		Product Liability Intentional Misconduct		
Other Landlord/Tenant	Premises Liability				
Title to Property	Other Negligence		Employment Tort		
Judicial Foreclosure	Malpractice		Insurance Tort		
Other Title to Property	Medical/Dental		Other Tort		
Other Real Property	Legal				
Condemnation/Eminent Domain	Accounting				
Other Real Property	Other Malpractice		Yealistal Designa/Armool		
Probate (select case type and estate value)	Construction Defect & Cont Construction Defect	ract	Judicial Review/Appeal Judicial Review		
Summary Administration	Chapter 40		Foreclosure Mediation Case		
General Administration	Other Construction Defect		Petition to Seal Records		
Special Administration	Contract Case	2	Mental Competency		
Set Aside	Uniform Commercial Code		Nevada State Agency Appeal		
Trust/Conservatorship	Building and Construction		Department of Motor Vehicle		
Other Probate	Insurance Carrier		Worker's Compensation		
Estate Value	Commercial Instrument		Other Nevada State Agency		
Over \$200,000	Collection of Accounts		Appeal Other		
Between \$100,000 and \$200,000	Employment Contract		Appeal from Lower Court		
Under \$100,000 or Unknown	Other Contract		Other Judicial Review/Appeal		
Under \$2,500			· ·		
Civil Writ			Other Civil Filing		
Civil Writ			Other Civil Filing		
Writ of Habeas Corpus	Writ of Prohibition		Compromise of Minor's Claim		
Writ of Mandamus	Other Civil Writ		Foreign Judgment		
Writ of Quo Warrant			Other Civil Matters		
limit .	ourt filings should be filed using th	ne Busines	s Court civil coversheet.		
2.0311000 00					
04/02/2015		H	meller		
Date	ature of initiating party or representative				

See other side for family-related case filings.