

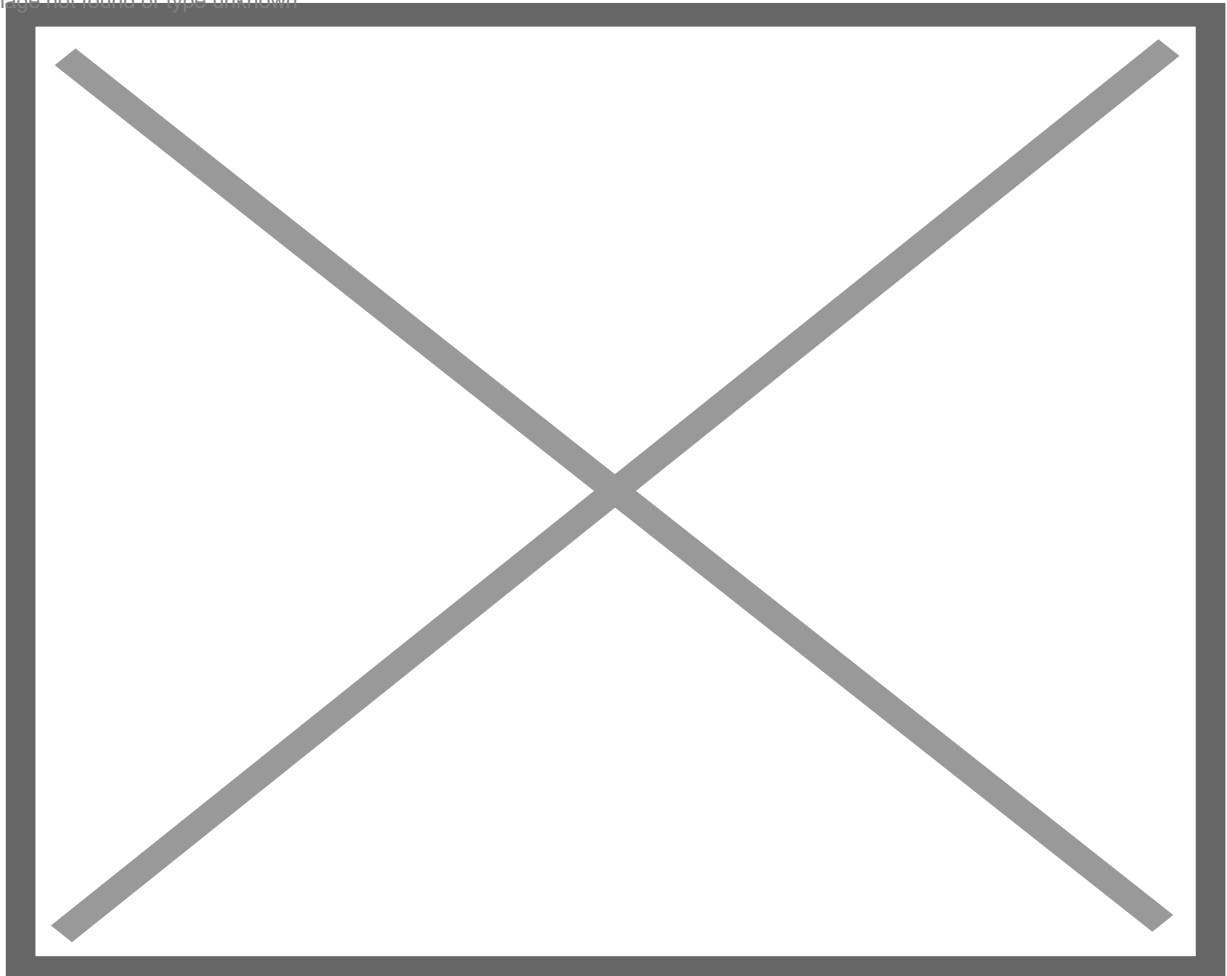
Judge Won't Answer Legislature's Questions About Actions During Expired Term, Threatens Attorneys With Sanctions

Legislature's legal tactics rebuffed by Superior Court judge

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Judge Renée Gumbs Carty. By. V.I. LEGISLATURE

In a short response to a motion from the defendants in former Senator Steven Payne's lawsuit against the 34th Legislature and its president Senator Donna Frett-Gregory, presiding judge Renée Gumbs Carty swatted away questions about a lacuna in her appointment to the bench between November 30 2022, when her 6-year +180 day term officially expired, and May 15 2023, when she was appointed Senior Sitting Judge of the Superior Court.

The motion, [filed on November 22](#) by lawyers representing the Legislature and other defendants, sought answers about Judge Gumbs Carty's authority to act during this period. A second motion asked for a halt of court proceedings for 10 days following the jurist's response.

On Thursday, Judge Gumbs Carty denied both motions, and accused defense counsel of attempting to violate the territory's Rules of Civil Procedure by filing frivolous motions "to harass, delay, [and] distract from the nature of ... proceedings." Additional attempts at such frivolous motions, she said, would result in a "show cause" hearing, in which the attorneys in question would have to argue why they should not be sanctioned.

Having dispensed with the questions about her appointment status, the way is now clear for the bench trial on the matter scheduled for March 14, 2024, unless of course new filings are made that would necessitate a change in the timeline.

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