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S.C. SUPREME COURT

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF BEAUFORT

IN GENERAL SESSIONS
14th JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

HAMPTON B. LUZAK,

Petitioner,

vs.

CASE NOS.: 2016-CP-07-01919
2019-CP-07-01253
-01924

MERRILL B. LIGHT, et al,

Respondents.

HEARING BEFORE:

HONORABLE BENTLEY PRICE

DATE:

July 2, 2021

LOCATION:

BEAUFORT COUNTY JUDICIAL CENTER
102 RIBAUT ROAD
BEAUFORT, SC 29902

REPORTED BY:

KYMBERLEE WILLIAMS, CSR/RPR

1 THE COURT: All right.

2 MR. TRAXLER: I just need to say a couple of
3 preparatory things.

4 THE COURT: That will be fine.

5 MR. TRAXLER: First of all, for the record, I'm
6 Tom Traxler, co-counsel for the Plaintiff, along
7 with Alan Medlin, Bill Hogan, and Mike MacCloskie. Also with
8 us is Della Ballard, who is our Supreme Court Counsel in the
9 other appellate matters. She is here, if any questions arise
10 with regard to our motion before the Supreme Court.

11 THE COURT: That will become moot because I'm
12 reassigning the case. So that will be a non-issue.

13 MR. TRAXLER: Yes, sir. Mr. Gilreath is not
14 here.

15 THE COURT: I do want to make sure the record is
16 clear. I'm not recusing myself. I'm just reassigning the
17 case for some other reasons that I need to do. I will put
18 that on the record.

19 The case will be reassigned. Here's why. I am
20 the chief administrative judge for five counties. In doing
21 so, I receive 60 to 80 emails a day, people begging me to
22 help them move their cases along. I'm traveling and
23 statusing conferences. Every single week I'm going to
24 Beaufort, Allendale, everywhere that I've got to go to ensure
25 these people get their cases on the roster.

1 going to need to take, from that standpoint, take over as the
2 original jurisdiction to reassign the case. Now that I'm
3 reassigning the case, does that simply become moot, or do I
4 need to address anything concerning that?

5 MR. TRAXLER: I'll let Ms. Ballard address that.

6 THE COURT: I just want to make sure that I don't
7 need to do something that I'm doing something correctly.

8 MS. BALLARD: Thank you, Your Honor. Desa
9 Ballard.

10 THE COURT: How are you?

11 MS. BALLARD: I'm joining the party late.

12 THE COURT: How are you?

13 MS. BALLARD: I'm well. It's good to see you,
14 again.

15 THE COURT: Good to see you. Did you come from
16 Columbia?

17 MS. BALLARD: No, I came actually from Savannah
18 this morning. We have a house down there that we enjoy on
19 the holidays.

20 THE COURT: Good. Are you staying the whole
21 week?

22 MS. BALLARD: I think the reason I was brought
23 into this case is because I have the background of having
24 spent four years at the Supreme Court understanding how the
25 court system operates.