

PRESS RELEASE – December 19, 2008**DISTRICT ATTORNEY COMMENTS ON CONCLUSION OF GRAND JURY**

“The Kay County Grand Jury has concluded their duty after spending seven days looking into more than 80 alleged violations of law and/or misconduct by public officers. Twelve dedicated citizens of Kay County concluded that there was no evidence supporting *ANY* criminal charges or claims of misconduct. These findings do not surprise me, since I had previously made those same findings in those matters that had been submitted to my office. However, I would like to share several thoughts with the people of Kay County. My comments do not address any content of what has taken place, as I want to stress that it is a *crime* for any person (including myself and the jurors themselves) to discuss any of the matter or evidence that was presented during this process. Rather, my thoughts go to the significant waste of resources that has taken place.

The Constitutional right for the citizens of this State to impanel a Grand Jury is a very valuable and important right that should be treasured by our people. Unfortunately, when that right is misused, it places a great burden on a large number of people. Fifteen citizens (including alternate Jurors), along with an OSBI agent and two District Attorneys (from Oklahoma City, Clinton, and Altus, respectively) spent the bulk of two full weeks away from their jobs and lives to conduct this Grand Jury. In addition, *thousands* of taxpayer dollars were spent through the process. For all of that time, energy, and money, there were a grand total of **ZERO findings of criminal activity or misconduct by officials.**

According to the FINAL REPORT OF THE GRAND JURY (“The Report”), nearly all the complaints/requests were submitted by three to four individuals with complaints about their city government in Blackwell. And, specifically, “many of the complaints and allegations presented to the Grand Jury appear to be the result of, or at least influenced by, the ongoing litigation and disputes between Get Real Cable System and the City of Blackwell.” Get Real Cable is owned by the primary instigator of the Petition for the Grand Jury.

It seems clear from The Report that a Grand Jury should not have been impaneled to look into the private matters and complaints of a few disgruntled people. Among the jurors’ findings and comments in The Report are the following:

- **“A Grand Jury cannot act upon matters that are civil in nature, or determine liability of parties in lawsuits or provide an opinion regarding merits of any potential lawsuits.”**
- **“...the only recourse for those unhappy is through the civil process.”**
- **“...the Grand Jury System *should not be used to influence or replace the civil process of the judicial system.*”**

Kay County citizens should be troubled by the County & State resources that were expended because of the personal agendas of a very few people. In the future, I strongly encourage everyone to carefully consider the subjects in, and motivations behind, Grand Jury Petitions before signing them.

Finally, we should all express our sincere thanks to those 15 people who served as Grand Jurors, who took their task very seriously, and who worked diligently on behalf of all of the people of Kay County to issue their Final Report."

Mark L. Gibson

*MhG
12/19/08*