

Josh Overholt
112 Wabash Ave
Mattoon, IL 61938
josh.overholt@gmail.com
217-254-5167

Date: March 29, 2025

Hon. Mark E. Bovard
Chief Judge
651 Jackson Ave., 2nd Floor
Charleston, IL 61920

Dear Chief Judge Bovard,

Congratulations on your recent appointment as Chief Judge. I write to you today with deep respect for our judicial system and an unwavering belief in the principles that define our nation. I respectfully request your intervention to review and overturn a penalty imposed on me following an incident on April 11, 2024, which I believe unjustly infringes upon my First Amendment rights. Enclosed, you will find a complaint I submitted to the Illinois Attorney General, along with their response.

Freedom of speech is a cornerstone of American democracy, enshrined in our Constitution and woven into the fabric of our society. It permeates law, culture, history, presidential proclamations, international diplomacy, media, education, civil rights, business, art, religion, science, public health, technology, sports, and more. Freedom of speech is not a minor subject to be treated separately like a traffic matter; it is central to the American way of life.

The statute for which I am cited is complex, technical, and esoteric, with numerous exemptions that apply to my actions on that day. One such exemption is voice operation, which underscores the authors' recognition that no statute can negate the right to free speech. In America, one cannot be penalized by the government for speaking freely in a traditional public forum. The idea that an American citizen can be stopped, ticketed, fined, and found guilty in a court of law simply for the act of speaking to an inanimate object is so contrary to the core principles of our society that it demands vigorous opposition.

Legally, in the United States, there is no explicit requirement for ordinary citizens to defend the Constitution. However, government officials, including the President, members of Congress, and military personnel, take an oath to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic". Morally and Civically, many argue that citizens do have a duty to uphold and protect the principles enshrined in the Constitution.

My history and skills, though not included with this letter, would demonstrate the appropriateness of my actions that day. However, the core of my argument is that First Amendment rights are inalienable rights for all citizens.

I do not continue this fight against injustice for malicious reasons. I do not seek to get away with a crime. It is not my intent to tear anyone down or file unnecessary complaints. I just demand to fully enjoy the freedoms and liberties that are the bedrock of our great nation. These rights are not just promises, but the essence of our identity and heritage.

Furthermore, in my professional field, even the slightest appearance of impropriety related to technology can pose significant reputational risks. Anything on my record could severely impact my income.

I trust in your commitment to uphold the Constitutional rule of law as Chief Judge. I respectfully ask that you rectify this matter by overturning my penalty, expunging it from my record, and refunding the fine. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Josh Overholt