

ELECTIONS

Candidate for Arizona House of Representatives was convicted of striking ex-fiancé

Ananya Tiwari Arizona Republic

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A Republican candidate running for the Arizona House of Representatives in north Phoenix has a conviction stemming from a domestic violence incident.

Christian Lamar, 37, is one of four Republicans seeking the nomination for the House in Legislative District 2. He was convicted of assault against his then-fiancé in Phoenix in 2015.

The two Republicans who receive the most votes in the Aug. 2 primary will move on to the general election in November.

As part of his conviction, Lamar had to fulfill various conditions set by the municipal court of Phoenix and served one day in confinement.

Lamar maintains his innocence, despite three courts upholding the conviction. He also sued the officer on duty that night, the Phoenix Police Department, the city and other departments over the arrest. The case was dismissed, however.

Another race: Arizona House candidate involved in domestic violence incident, attributes to PTSD from military service

Lamar's domestic assault case

Lamar was charged with domestic assault after his then fiancé called the police, accusing him of pushing her and hitting her in the face. The incident occurred on a September morning in 2015 in Phoenix, after the two had had an argument at a casino and returned separately to Lamar's apartment. His ex-fiancé went to the apartment to return his phone, as she stated in a 911 call. Both were intoxicated, per police.

Though Lamar maintains his innocence, he also told The Arizona Republic that he does not have complete recollection of what occurred that night, and said that he was carrying a frying pan around the apartment complex for "self-defense."

"I mean, I don't, I don't even really remember," he said in an interview when asked about his recollection of the sequence of events for the night and about carrying a pan. "Who knows what her plan was? I can't get in her head to tell you that in the past what she was planning to do, but I was prepared for it."

The Republic was unable to locate the victim for comment.

Arizona's primary is Aug. 2: Here's everything you need to know to vote

What the records show

On Sept. 27, 2015, a domestic violence complaint was filed that early morning against Lamar by his ex-fiancé, after the officer who responded noticed a mark on her face and the victim said Lamar punched her, per police records and the officer's testimony in court.

The next month the Phoenix Municipal Court convicted him, stating that "the defendant intentionally or knowingly caused physical injury to another, a Class 1 misdemeanor" in violation of the law.

He was fined, served one day in jail with four days suspended and was ordered to serve 11 months of probation. He also had to undergo counseling, enroll in a screening program and was barred from having any contact, invited or not, with the victim, nor “harm, threaten or harass” his ex-fiancé.

In November 2018, Lamar appealed to set aside the judgment, stating that he had “completed all the requirements of the sentence, I have had NO further contact with the opposing party, and NO re-occurrences of such charge or offense.” His application was granted and the judgment was set aside.

Two years prior to that, Lamar also filed a civil rights lawsuit against the officer on duty that night, the Phoenix Police Department, the city of Phoenix and others, claiming his civil rights were violated by the arrest. He sought \$7 million in damages, but the case was dismissed by a federal judge.

In this lawsuit he claimed his Fifth and 14th Amendment rights were violated. Lamar claimed the investigation was maliciously turned against him due to his race and gender.

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A Twitter tirade against conviction

Lamar is endorsed by gubernatorial candidate Kari Lake, state Rep. Shannna Bolick (who is running for secretary of state) and Sen. Warren Petersen — though Petersen said he wasn’t aware of the conviction and would revisit his endorsement because of it. Lake and Bolick did not respond to requests for comment about the endorsement.

On Twitter in June, Lamar posted that a “dirty dossier” on him was “pending release” regarding misdemeanor charges. He followed that post with multiple statements saying he did not commit a crime.

"I have a right to maintain my innocence. I never took a plea deal. I don't care what the court says. I never punched, slapped, palmed or hit her," he wrote in the post.