



Todd V. McMurry
tmcumrtry@hemmerlaw.com

October 18, 2024

VIA U.S. REGULAR MAIL & E-MAIL

Leroy Chapman, Jr., Editor in Chief
THE ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION
223 Perimeter Center Pkwy NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30346

Re: Demand for Retraction and Apology

Dear Mr. Chapman, Jr.:

I write on behalf of my client, the Dustin Inman Society (DIS), to demand an immediate retraction and apology for the defamatory statements published in your October 7, 2024, article titled “Democrats in this Georgia district are backing a write-in candidate” by Tia Mitchell.

Through use of internet links, the AJC article wrongfully characterizes the Dustin Inman Society as a “Marietta-based anti-immigration hate group.” This characterization is false, defamatory, and published with actual malice. The Dustin Inman Society pushes for secure borders, is not “anti-immigration” and its proprietors do not hate anyone. Rather, DIS advocates for enforcement of U.S. immigration laws and actively opposes unlawful immigration. This distinction is crucial and well-known to staff at your publication.

I paste the offending paragraph from the AJC story:

*“A search of activity under her birth name, Karen Sacandy, which Stamper legally changed in 2019, showed that she previously was aligned **with a Marietta-based anti-immigration hate group**. The group’s website often linked to Sacandy’s activities, like a letter seeking information about the state’s Immigration Enforcement Review Board and a copy of a letter to the editor supporting legislation to prevent immigrants claiming asylum from obtaining driver’s licenses.”*

We note the AJC informs readers that the Dustin Inman Society “often” linked to Karen Sacandy/Kate Stamper activities -- but produces only two occasions.

Your story, for which DIS founder and president D.A. King was not contacted, informs readers that Sacandy/Stamper “was aligned” with the Dustin Inman Society. We note that polls show that a majority of Americans oppose the federal offense of illegal immigration. Since the letter posted on the DIS site was a published missive to the editor at the Cherokee Tribune, we must ask: does this make that newspaper a “Cherokee County-based anti-immigration hate group”?

Your characterization demonstrates a reckless and vindictive disregard for the truth, rising to the level of actual malice as defined in *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan*. Actual malice in defamation law refers to publication of a statement with knowledge that it is false or with reckless disregard of whether it is false or not. Your repeated mischaracterization of the Dustin Inman Society, despite having been corrected on numerous occasions, clearly meets this standard.

The Dustin Inman Society’s position on immigration is clear and public:

1. It supports sustainable levels of legal immigration through established channels.
2. It opposes unlawful immigration due to various societal concerns, including:
 - Strain on public resources and services
 - Potential and real public safety issues
 - Economic impacts on low-wage American workers and America’s poor
 - Challenges to the rule of law
3. The Dustin Inman Society defends legal immigrants when media attempt to blur the difference between them and illegal aliens.

Moreover, the Dustin Inman Society’s board includes lawful immigrants who have navigated the proper channels for authorized immigration. This fact alone should dispel any notion that the organization is “anti-immigration.” As he has informed you multiple times over much of the last two decades, D.A. King’s sister is a real, legal immigrant.

While we acknowledge that the Southern Poverty Law Center has designated the Dustin Inman Society as an “anti-immigrant hate group that denigrates all immigrants,” your article presents the “anti-immigration hate group” characterization as the Atlanta Journal Constitution’s independent assessment and statement of fact.

This smear is not only demonstrably false and ignores Mr. King’s many communications to you advising you of the truth, but also demonstrates an exceedingly unprofessional failure to fact-check and verify information before publication.

We demand that the Atlanta Journal Constitution:

October 18, 2024

Page 3

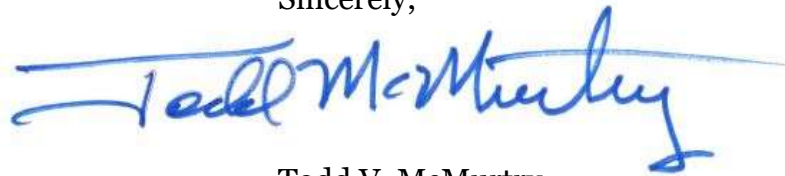
1. Immediately publicly retract the defaming statement in the October 7, 2024, article.

2. Publish a prominent apology, equal in visibility and placement to the original defamatory article.

3. Cease and desist from further defamatory characterizations of the Dustin Inman Society.

Failure to comply with these demands may result in further legal action. We expect your prompt attention to this matter and await your timely response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Todd V. McMurtry". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Todd V. McMurtry

cc: James Abely, Esq.