

Investigator finds sufficient evidence former Senate chief clerk had nonconsensual sexual contact with woman at conference

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A third-party investigator hired by the Legislature found sufficient evidence that former Senate Chief Clerk Mike Queensland engaged in nonconsensual sexual contact with an intoxicated woman during a May conference in California, according to a report obtained by WisPolitics.

The report for the first time details the allegations against Queensland that resulted in his abrupt suspension and resignation, as well as a third-party investigator's conclusion that one of the claims was credible.

Senate Minority Leader Melissa Agard, D-Madison, said Queensland's resignation was the only appropriate course of action considering the severity of the misconduct detailed in the report.

"Survivors must be believed and supported," Agard said. "We must send a clear message that our government always stands with survivors."

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According to the investigative report, which was obtained through an open records request, an "external party" raised concerns with the state Senate in late August about Queensland's conduct, including three alleged incidents of sexual misconduct or harassment at various state legislature association conferences.

Not long after, Queensland's access to state buildings and his state email were suspended during the investigation.

The investigator concluded two couldn't be substantiated and were "unsubstantiated rumors."

The investigator found credible the allegations made by a woman identified in the report as Jane Doe. She told the investigator she was at a conference with participants from various state clerks' offices around the country when she went out for drinks. She reported becoming intoxicated and coming to in her hotel room with Queensland on top of her trying to remove her pants and underwear.

The woman said she yelled for Queensland to stop four or five times before he finally complied and she was able to shove him off her. The woman recalled at one point she yelled, "Stop. What are you doing? No. Aren't you married?"

She told the investigator that Queensland was also very intoxicated and "left in a huff." She immediately contacted others about what had happened.

The investigator concluded Queensland's insistence the encounter was consensual wasn't credible for a number of reasons. That includes that his timeline of the events didn't match up with evidence from other witnesses such as text messages that provided a timeline that contradicted his claims. The investigator also found his answers in an interview "opaque, rehearsed and incongruous."

The investigator also found problematic Queensland's recollection that while he was walking with the woman and another witness to the final bar they visited, she stressed she'd never be with a married man because she found marital infidelity offensive.

"This declaration barely an hour prior to the hotel room encounter should have put Mr. Queensland on notice that Ms. Doe did not welcome any sexual advances from him since she knew he was married," the investigator wrote. "Yet he proceeded while she was intoxicated and perhaps not able to object in a timely manner."

The report noted the woman didn't file a complaint against Queensland due to her wish for privacy. But she agreed to speak with the investigator since the matter was being investigated.

A spokesperson for Senate Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu, R-Oostburg, didn't immediately respond to a request for comment on the report.