

PRESS RELEASE

Des Moines, Iowa- Iowans deserve to know the truth about why Jerry Foxhoven was fired as the Director of the Iowa Department of Human Services.

Foxhoven has thus far remained above the fray despite the whisper campaign of half-truths and false innuendos coming from Governor Kim Reynolds, her staff and her political attack dogs.

Foxhoven was appointed Director on June 17, 2017. Approximately six months into his tenure, Foxhoven hired Mike Randall as the Division Administrator of Medicaid. Randall was from out-of-state and it was agreed that an Iowa connection was needed for a smooth transition to a managed care system. Paige Thorson (Governor Reynolds's Deputy Chief of Staff) was brought into DHS because she knew Iowa and its healthcare providers. Because Thorson was providing a service to DHS, Foxhoven signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) for fiscal years 2018 and 2019 and agreed that DHS would pay 69% of her salary for those years.

In February/March of 2019, as fiscal year 2019 drew to a close, Foxhoven had discussions with Sara Craig Gongol (Governor's Chief of Staff) about Thorson's role at DHS. Foxhoven advised Gongol that Mike Randall was now familiar with the Iowa providers and that Thorson was no longer performing duties that furthered the mission of DHS.

Foxhoven raised the question with Gongol whether it was legal for DHS to continue paying any of Thorson's salary when her role had devolved to acting as liaison to the Governor's office. Gongol could not and did not answer the question and refused to ask the Governor's legal counsel, Sam Langholtz, for his opinion. Foxhoven told Gongol that he was going to send an email to the Assistant Attorney Generals assigned to DHS on Tuesday, June 18, 2019 asking for a legal opinion concerning the legality of DHS continuing to pay Thorson's salary.

On June 17, 2019, Gongol and Langholtz terminated Foxhoven before he could send the email. The only reason given for termination was that they "we're going in a different direction." They demanded the immediate return of all of his state issued equipment and told him not to return to his office.

Contrary to statements made by the Governor's staff, Foxhoven did not initiate contact with the Office of Inspector General (OIG) or the State Auditor. Instead, a special agent from the OIG came to Foxhoven's home and requested an interview. Similarly, the Auditor's office contacted Foxhoven and requested an interview which took place on July 30, 2019.

Foxhoven will be pursuing a claim for wrongful termination under applicable whistleblower laws.