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David J. Smith
Clerk

CONFIDENTIAL

Before the Chief Judge of the
Eleventh Judicial Circuit

Judicial Complaint Nos. 11-26-90021 and 11-26-90022

ORDER

An individual has filed a Complaint against a United States magistrate judge and a United States district judge under the Judicial Conduct and Disability Act of 1980, 28 U.S.C. §§ 351–364, and the Rules for Judicial-Conduct and Judicial-Disability Proceedings of the Judicial Conference of the United States.

As an initial matter, after Complainant filed his Complaint, he filed two supplements. The filing of the supplements is permitted. *See* 11th Cir. JCDR 6.7.

Background

The record establishes that Complainant filed a *pro se* civil complaint against one defendant, a motion for leave to proceed *in forma pauperis*, a motion for permission to file electronically, and a “Notice of Non-Consent (Objection) to U.S. Magistrate Judge.” The Subject Magistrate Judge entered an order denying the motion

to file electronically. Complainant then filed an amended complaint against multiple defendants and a “Motion to Article III Federal Judge to E-File.” The Subject District Judge issued an order overruling Complainant’s objection to the order denying his motion to file electronically.

The Subject Magistrate Judge entered an order taking Complainant’s *in forma pauperis* motion under advisement, concluding in part that the amended complaint was a shotgun pleading, and providing him with an opportunity to file a second amended complaint. Complainant then filed a notice of voluntary dismissal, and the Subject District Judge entered an order denying all pending motions as moot and closing the case. Afterward, a deputy clerk issued a notice stating that a local rule provides that a seal under the rule expires 90 days after a case is closed and all appeals are exhausted.

Complaint

Complainant alleges that the Subject Judges engaged in misconduct, violated his civil rights, and committed a crime by failing to timely rule on his complaint, amended complaint, and motion to proceed *in forma pauperis*. He alleges the Subject Judges ignored filings, that the Subject District Judge “wrongly denied” his objections to the Subject Magistrate Judge’s rulings, and that he was “wrongly prohibited” from using the court’s electronic-filing system. He alleges the Subject District Judge tried “to seal a record of her own misconduct, misconduct of her colleagues, and the homicide” of a certain individual. He also takes issue with the actions of other individuals, and he attached documents to his Complaint.

Supplement

In the first supplemental filing, Complainant requests that his Complaint be transferred to another judicial council because it “also involves” other circuit judges, district judges, and a clerk of court. In his second supplemental filing, Complainant provided a court-issued notice pertaining to sealed documents.

Discussion

Judicial-Conduct Rule 4(b)(1) provides in part that “[c]ognizable misconduct does not include an allegation that calls into question the correctness of a judge’s ruling, including a failure to recuse.” The Commentary on Rule 4 explains the rationale for this rule as follows:

Rule 4(b)(1) tracks the Act, 28 U.S.C. § 352(b)(1)(A)(ii), in excluding from the definition of misconduct allegations “[d]irectly related to the merits of a decision or procedural ruling.” This exclusion preserves the independence of judges in the exercise of judicial authority by ensuring that the complaint procedure is not used to collaterally call into question the substance of a judge’s decision or procedural ruling. Any allegation that calls into question the correctness of an official decision or procedural ruling of a judge — without more — is merits-related.

Furthermore, Judicial-Conduct Rule 4(b)(2) provides that cognizable misconduct does not include “an allegation about delay in rendering a decision or ruling, unless the allegation concerns an improper motive in delaying a particular decision or habitual delay

in a significant number of unrelated cases.” The “Commentary on Rule 4” states that “a complaint of delay in a single case is excluded as merits-related.”

As an initial matter, Complainant’s request to transfer this proceeding to the judicial council of another circuit is **DENIED**. The Complaint fails to present a basis for a finding of misconduct. To the extent Complainant’s allegations concern the substance of the Subject Judges’ official actions, findings, rulings, and orders in Complainant’s case, the allegations are directly related to the merits of the Subject Judges’ decisions or procedural rulings. Judicial-Conduct Rule 11(c)(1)(B). Complainant’s remaining claims are based on allegations lacking sufficient evidence to raise an inference that the Subject Judges acted with an illicit or improper motive, committed a crime, or otherwise engaged in misconduct. Judicial-Conduct Rule 11(c)(1)(D). For these reasons, this Complaint is **DISMISSED**.

/s/ William H. Pryor Jr.
Chief Judge