

Dunstan: Prenzler owes taxpayers 'apology' after judge ruling

July 27 2016 4:25 PM



(This is a personal commentary from Madison County Board Chairman Alan Dunstan with his opinions about the recent judge order increasing a verdict in a case involving County Treasurer Kurt Prenzler.)

EDWARDSVILLE – Madison County Board Chairman Alan Dunstan today called on County Treasurer Kurt Prenzler to “apologize” for costing Madison County taxpayers almost \$1 million for illegally firing a disabled employee with a life-threatening illness. Prenzler fired the woman after she refused to let Prenzler cut her pay in half, leaving her with a disability, without health insurance, and with mounting medical bills.

This week, a Federal Judge issued an Order increasing the verdict to \$658,898 from the jury verdict of \$450,000 issued in February. Including Madison County’s legal fees in defending Prenzler, the cost to taxpayers will approach \$1 million.

“There is no excuse for discriminating against any employee, much less a disabled employee. Mr. Prenzler owes this woman and Madison County taxpayers an apology for

his discriminatory actions against a disabled employee. A jury has found him guilty of violating this woman's rights and the taxpayers are going to have to pay the price for his bad judgment," said Dunstan.

The Federal Judge also issued an injunction against Prenzler prohibiting him from violating an employee's disability rights in the future. The Order noted that the jury found that Prenzler discriminated against the former employee and that Prenzler's discriminatory conduct could possibly persist in the future.

Dunstan said this unusual measure by a Federal Court Order is a reflection of Prenzler's conduct in office.

"Prenzler trampled on the rights of this woman. This is consistent with his reckless past conduct as Treasurer including his mismanagement of millions in county investments, large raises to political appointees, and getting involved in political motivated lawsuits. Who is Prenzler willing to run over in the future? The Federal Judge made sure he won't do this again or will face the consequences of the Court."

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