



State's Attorney candidate Ron Williams makes call toward Chairman Alan Dunstan regarding Lavite case

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EDWARDSVILLE - Candidate for State's Attorney Ron Williams is calling on County Board Chairman Alan Dunstan to lift his ban and to allow Veterans Assistance Commission Superintendent Brad Lavite go back to work in his office at the Administration Building.

Williams is also calling on State's Attorney Tom Gibbons, the county's legal counsel, to advise Dunstan that discriminating against a disabled and decorated combat veteran is opening up the county taxpayers to significant financial liability.

"Banning Maj. Bradley Lavite from the administration building is wrong and clearly not legal," Williams said. "Everyday in the administration building, many individuals who have been convicted of violent offenses enter the building to visit the probation department and they have a right to do so. Banning Lavite for a PTSD episode over a year ago is wrong and the position is legally indefensible."

Two weeks ago a lawyer representing Lavite filed a civil rights case in Federal Court asking that he be allowed to return to work. Lavite recently received a legal victory in the Illinois 5th Appellate Court moving another case against the county forward in circuit court.

"Everyday that Dunstan denies Lavite an opportunity to go back to work is another day Madison County Veterans are impacted and the potential penalties for this decision increases," Williams said. "I know first hand that the stress of combat is a lifelong condition that impacts people differently. We owe it to our combat veterans to get them the help they need and support them as their careers move them in another path away from the military."

Williams spent 32 years in the US Army and retired as a colonel. He was a graduate of USMA at West Point and spent two tours in Vietnam where he received three bronze stars and he recently published a book about his experience in Vietnam called "We Were Winning When I Left."

"As State's Attorney I will work closely with the Veterans groups to make sure we have the best interest of veterans who enter the Madison County legal system," Williams said. "I believe the way the county is handling Lavite's PTSD episode is sending the wrong message to all military personnel and veterans. Given the county's proximity to Scott Air Force Base and its the positive impact on our economy, we have duty to treat veterans in a respectful manner."

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