

Rep. Davis field campaign director Lovell dismissed after Springfield bar incident, he faces charges

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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SEE VIDEO BELOW:

SPRINGFIELD - Illinois U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis has dismissed his field campaign director Levi Lovell after an incident that has gone viral by video from JP Kelly's Bar, 300 E. Adams St. in Springfield on Wednesday night.

Springfield Police said they believe the man - Lovell - was taking video and trying to get members of the Betsy Dirksen Londrigan campaign to make an inappropriate statement on camera. Lovell was captured on video by others during his tirade at the bar.

In the end, Lovell was asked to leave the bar and is shown on video shoving people. He also is on camera shouting obscenities and alleging improper treatment at the bar because of his race, saying the body guard was committing a hate crime removing him from the premises. A body guard from JP Kelly's escorted him out of the bar. Lovell was arrested for allegedly harassing U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis' opponent - Betsy Dirksen Londrigan - at the Springfield event. Lovell is a resident of Hillsboro.

U.S. Rep. Davis fired Lovell from the campaign on Thursday after learning of the charge and incident, Davis' campaign manager Matt Butcher said. The video of Lovell's antics were distributed in the media throughout Illinois and Missouri. A story and the video even appeared in the Washington Post.

Matt Butcher, Campaign Manager said: "As soon as I was made aware of the incident, his employment was immediately terminated. This campaign has a zero-tolerance policy for harassment or violence of any kind."

U.S. Rep. Davis said: "My sincerest apologies to Betsy, her husband Tom, and everyone at JP Kelly's. The incident involving a young field representative on my campaign should have never happened and his employment was immediately terminated. His actions go against everything I stand for and go directly against what I have been promoting, which is more civility in politics. This kind of behavior will never be tolerated on my campaign or with anyone on my staff."

Betsy Dirksen Londrigan had this statement: "I'm relieved that my family, staff, and supporters are all ok and that this incident didn't escalate even further. I am disturbed that someone would show up to an event and try to harass and intimidate me and my family, but he is sorely mistaken if he thinks that it is going to slow me down one bit. Nasty, divisive politics do nothing for our community. I will continue to hold public town halls, campaign with civility, and show this office and voters the respect they deserve."

Emma Brown, Dirksen-Londrigan's campaign manager said: "It's clear that Rodney Davis is worried about his re-election, but that is no excuse for his staff's actions. Rodney needs to answer very clearly whether he or his campaign were aware of what this young man planned to do or even directed him to attend the event and try to intimidate Betsy, her family, and her supporters."