



Daniel Edward Logsdon, Jr.
Chair

Susie Watkins
Vice Chair

Post Office Box 694
Frankfort KY 40602

190 Democrat Drive
Frankfort KY 40601

Phone 502.695.4828
Fax 502.695.7629

www.kydemocrat.com

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VIA U.S. MAIL

Honorable Crit Luallen
Auditor of Public Accounts
209 St. Clair St.
Frankfort, Ky. 40601-1817

RE: Request for Audit of Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer and Department of Agriculture

Dear Auditor Luallen:

I write to request an immediate and accelerated audit concerning (1) the out-of-control spending by Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer, and (2) the complete management breakdown in the Department of Agriculture.

Over the past year, it has come to light that Mr. Farmer has repeatedly and irresponsibly used state resources for personal purposes. As outlined below, Mr. Farmer used taxpayer dollars to enrich himself. These abuses of taxpayer dollars have been well-chronicled in the media.

However, a new abuse has been revealed, one that I believe constitutes an illegal use of taxpayer dollars for a blatant personal use. In the past week, it has been revealed, first through an anonymous email and later confirmed by Mr. Farmer's own office, that Mr. Farmer, in a telephone call at 8 p.m., ordered an employee to use a taxpayer-funded credit card to purchase a refrigerator and immediately deliver it to Mr. Farmer's home. Mr. Farmer's office has not only confirmed this purchase, but admitted it was for Mr. Farmer's home. In addition, his office made a separate purchase of another refrigerator for Commissioner Farmer. His office has only been able to locate one of these refrigerators. Here are the facts:

Refrigerator Purchased for Commissioner's Home. The August 27, 2011 *Courier Journal* article entitled "Ky.-bought fridge was in Farmer's home," reported that the state Department of Agriculture bought a refrigerator in February, 2010 that was delivered to Richie Farmer's personal residence where it remained for 16 months "until May of this year, when Farmer moved his belongings from that house after his wife filed for divorce." See 8/27/11 Article, attached as Exh. 1.

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State Employee Ordered to Make Purchase with State Credit Card. According to an August 13, 2011 article in the *Herald Leader*, an email that was recently submitted to the Personnel Board explained how Farmer personally called state employee David Flint at 8 p.m. one night. Farmer ordered Mr. Flint to "go to Lowe's here in Frankfort and purchase a refrigerator for him on his procard and to bring it to his house that evening." See 8/13/11 Article, attached as Exh. 2. The email also claims Mr. Flint put up political signs on state time.

State Employee Made Second Fridge Purchase for Commissioner. According to an August 31, 2011 Courier Journal article, a second refrigerator was purchased on August 11, 2010 for the Commissioner's Office. See 8/31/11 Article, attached as Exh. 3.

Farmer Office Unable to Locate Fridge. According to an August 31, 2011 Courier Journal article, despite a search by his employees, Farmer's office has only been able to locate one of the refrigerators. See 8/31/11 Article, attached as Exh. 4.

Your office has warned the Department of Agriculture on numerous occasions about improper use of state credit cards. Here, a constitutional officer specifically ordered a state employee to purchase a fridge for his home on a state credit card. Such blatant disregard for the law and proper operating protocols requires an immediate and accelerated audit of Farmer's spending state tax dollars for personal use.

Commissioner's past abuse of taxpayer dollars include:

- Mr. Farmer failed to report personal miles on his state vehicle for eight years. [Herald Leader, 5/4/11]
- Mr. Farmer wasted more than \$1,600 of taxpayer funds staying in a hotel suite 24 miles from his home. [Courier Journal, 4/22/11]
- Mr. Farmer took three aides and their families on an eight-day Caribbean vacation costing taxpayers nearly \$10,000. [Herald-Leader, 10/17/10]
 - Mr. Farmer's purchase of \$32 plates of Yellowfin Tuna and \$10 slices of banana cheesecake. [Herald-Leader, 10/17/10]
 - Mr. Farmer's charge of \$100 for spa treatment, plus a \$20 tip. [AP, 10/17/10]
 - Mr. Farmer's large tips for drivers, bellhops and attendants, and paid \$50 baggage fees. [AP, 10/17/10]
- Mr. Farmer purchased new vehicles for his Department, including a \$35,340 Chevy Suburban for his own use. [Herald Leader, [8/26/10](#)]
- Mr. Farmer gave close employees raises while the rest of government cut back. [Herald Leader, 12/3/10]

In addition, Mr. Farmer has knowingly failed for almost eight years to report personal miles on his state vehicle either to the Personnel Cabinet (to be subtracted from his pay) or to the IRS (to be reported as income). Mr. Farmer's own spokesperson called this a "*complete breakdown of management*" of the Department of Agriculture. The Department is managed by Mr. Farmer.

CONCLUSION

Both Mr. Farmer and the Department of Agriculture have spiraled out of control. They are intentionally misusing taxpayer dollars to personally benefit Mr. Farmer and his employees. An immediate and accelerated audit is both necessary and warranted.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D - 2' with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Daniel Logsdon