

MARGOT HERSTER

June 24, 2024

To: The West Point community

Subject: Suitability and Fitness of Scott Sullivan

Dear Colleague,

Last month, a Special Agent from the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency contacted me for an investigation of suitability and fitness of Scott Sullivan for a position of national security and public trust. In my interview, I answered with many examples of unethical, irresponsible and dangerous conduct by Mr. Sullivan in higher education settings and as an attorney. I also described several discreet acts of violence and exploitation affecting me, my family, and college students working with me. Because I understand Mr. Sullivan recently sought affiliation at West Point in law and the Army Cyber Institute, I am sharing a bit with you as warning. I am his former colleague, spouse and partner of 26 years.

A concrete example that conveys the severity of Mr. Sullivan's misconduct is his bribery at Orleans Civil District Court, a Louisiana state court. In June 2022, I witnessed an explicit bribe transacted by his court runner on his behalf that was accepted by judge's chambers. *I have a recording of this bribe.* Mr. Sullivan cannot feign unawareness or distance himself: Two years prior, I made him aware in open court, documented by transcript, after I saw a prior incident of his runner engaging court staff to gain improper access to facilities and manipulate records for him then promise payment of apparent bribe.

Another example, in 2020, Mr. Sullivan coalesced with family and friends to hurt me through disinformation and abuse of criminal justice process in his hometown, Johnson County, Kansas. Harnessing animus erupting around civil rights activism and elections, they conjured a false "looter and vandal" narrative to spawn unlawful arrest *at my home* and prolonged prosecution fraught with irregularities by longtime colleagues of Mr. Sullivan's family. In the underlying incident, false statements by a Sullivan family friend and in police writeup are shown untruthful by firsthand surveillance video and witness statements that contradict them. With no investigation or proper procedure, an officer accosted and cuffed me at my apartment health club at direction of Mr. Sullivan's family friend who works there. The officer exposed me naked to others then captured video showing my vulva and injured me in his car. Continuing in humiliation, he seized my robe falsely claiming theft and forced me to wear a swimsuit through county detention where sheriff deputies expressed white supremacist hate while sexually harassing me and refused medical treatment. Mr. Sullivan's involvement is documented in public records. In an email transmitted expressly on Mr. Sullivan's behalf by his uncle, retired county undersheriff and local police, he relayed intent to malign me and assist toward that goal with the arresting police chief. The adjective-filled email, absent in facts, disparages me to officials using anti-woman and anti-media character assassination tropes that dominated 2020 hate and influence campaigns.

Mr. Sullivan's abuse is ongoing today, over six-years post-separation from our professional and personal relationship. **Mr. Sullivan has engaged all forms of economic, physical, sexual and psychological retribution directly and through proxies for his and their own benefit with their association and motive confirmed in writing and recordings in my possession.**

Common to all¹ in enterprise with Mr. Sullivan is intent to muzzle and obstruct victims of violence against women using unethical and corrupt means, often alongside gendered and salacious disinformation attacks, to evade criminal or civil responsibility while their state or local institutions face federal investigation, critical news coverage and civil rights suits. Also common is during elections when public right to receive information, fundamental to our democracy, on elected officials' conduct of duties is elevated.

¹ Most if not all individuals and institutions with whom Mr. Sullivan associates in this enterprise are publicly known for similar acts of dishonesty, corruption and/or deprivations of constitutional rights, many of which are verified and reprimanded by professional ethics boards, the U.S. Department of Justice, federal judges, consent decrees for unconstitutional patterns and practices, etc.


I am a media professional and educator also known for my support of survivors of sexual and gendered abuse, notably students of Mr. Sullivan's employer Louisiana State University. I was first to publicly challenge LSU victim retaliation and cover-up schemes for serial predators confirmed by high-profile investigations and Title IX litigation that recently ended in a multi-million dollar settlement for student victims. While he was LSU faculty and a colleague in my experiential learning program in New Orleans, Mr. Sullivan became abusive. His most acute, well documented assaults include rapes and gun violence threats at my school amidst years of escalating destructive behavior toward me and my program. He also misused alcohol, Adderall and benzodiazepines at work and home, including at my education workplace with students present.

With Mr. Sullivan's active and potent participation, I have experienced and documented the unscrupulous "story killer" tactics bought to light by journalist consortiums who investigated phenomena of attacks and retribution on members of the media and their sources to stymie reporting of their violence, corruption and crime at all costs. Mr. Sullivan has employed *all unscrupulous tactics* that Harvey Weinstein and his legal team used—both those against journalists and against his victims—admitted in court testimony and described by Ronen Farrow in *Catch and Kill: Lies, Spies, and a Conspiracy to Protect Predators*. That includes manipulation of courts and law enforcement; vexatious legal threats against speaking or publishing;² seizure of media works, materials and equipment; defamation of character in false and sexually harassing ways; threats and acts of career interference and sabotage; conspicuous following, monitoring and harassment in person and online; noncompliance with discovery and subpoenas; destroyed and altered evidence and court records such as transcripts, more. Mr. Sullivan does these as a public employee for his personal benefit against a member of the media whose work covers his own institution, making for even more so egregious deprivation of constitutional rights.

In my DCSA interview, the Special Agent asked me for a summary reason against recommending Mr. Sullivan for a position of national security and public trust. He does not respect civil service or the United States military. In addition to repeat acts to engage government officials in misconduct for his benefit, the people who Mr. Sullivan centers abuse upon for his unearned gain are my parents: William Herster, retired Regional Director, NHTSA, U.S. Department of Transportation and Commander, USCG Reserve (Ret.) and Sarah Herster, retired public school and museum teacher. He has stolen their retirement by financial coercion, by instilling fear through violence and life-destroying retribution against me, and by threat to them as key witnesses to his abuse and dishonesty since a teenager reemerged at unfathomable extremes. By deceit, violence and bribery, he has taken everything I and they created from honest work and their investments in my upbringing: my health, my home and education studio, my pets, my work and fruits of my academic accomplishment, my safety and stability, my money and financial security while undergoing expensive medical treatment and facing permanent disability, more.

It is not hyperbole to point out that Mr. Sullivan's attack by disinformation campaign and the broadening set of schemes known as "catch and kill" or unfittingly innocuously as "reputation management" derives from international security intelligence, war fighting, and political sabotage. That he seeks to teach, research or act as a lawyer for U.S. military, cyber and national security is troubling. Mr. Sullivan's immoral betrayals, irresponsibility with other people's lives and sensitive information, and exploitations of his own family to evade accountability disqualify him from any position of public trust.

Sincerely,



Margot Herster

² Including attempts by threat and deceit to coerce unethical non-disclosures on issues of public safety and strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs) to harass, overwhelm and financially deplete media outlets, sources or victims in an abuse of process to obstruct justice and speech.