

June 11, 2026

Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission
Supreme Court of Illinois
130 E. Randolph Dr., Ste. 1500
Chicago, IL 60601-6219

Submitted electronically to information@iadc.org

Dear Officials:

We are writing to raise serious concerns about the professional conduct of federal prosecutors in the Office of the United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, particularly the supervisory failures of U.S. Attorney Andrew S. Boutros. As recent news reporting has highlighted, a federal judge has identified specific acts of serious prosecutorial misconduct by members of this U.S. Attorney's Office during their criminal prosecution of the "Broadview Six" — activists who were arrested in connection with a demonstration outside an Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility in the Chicago suburb of Broadview, Illinois. On June 9, 2026, the court released transcripts of grand jury proceedings on [October 9, 2025](#); [October 16, 2025](#); and [October 23, 2025](#) that contain evidence of these allegations.

On information and belief, the federal prosecutors implicated by the judge are all attorneys licensed by the state of Illinois and/or are subject to the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct. We urge the Commission to investigate the allegations against them and take appropriate disciplinary action, potentially including and up to disbarment. Given the enormous coercive powers that prosecutors wield over people's lives and liberties, it is vital that they are held to the highest ethical and legal standards of the profession.

I. Background

The "[Broadview Six](#)" are a group of progressive political activists and outspoken critics of the Trump Administration who participated in a protest of the Broadview ICE facility on September 26, 2025:

- Katherine "Kat" Abughazaleh, a former Democratic congressional candidate;
- Andre Martin, who was Abughazaleh's deputy campaign manager;
- Brian Straw, Oak Park Village Board Trustee;
- Michael Rabbitt, 45th Ward Democratic Committeeperson;
- Catherine "Cat" Sharp, chief of staff to Alderman Andre Vasquez and former candidate to a Cook County Board seat; and
- Joselyn Walsh, a musician and researcher.

On October 29, 2025, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) [announced](#) that it had secured a federal grand jury indictment against these activists in connection with the September 26 demonstration on charges of conspiracy to injure or impede a federal officer and forcibly impeding, intimidating, and interfering with a federal officer. The DOJ [announcement](#) linked to a [video recording](#) purportedly showing the alleged criminal act around a government vehicle.

The government's [prosecution](#) against the Broadview Six steadily [collapsed](#) over the subsequent months, culminating in the prosecution dismissing all remaining charges with prejudice on May 21, 2026. Earlier that day, presiding U.S. District Court Judge April M. Perry had placed on the record four preliminary concerns about the government's grand jury conduct after reviewing the unredacted grand jury transcripts: vouching (in which prosecutors invoke their own assurances in lieu of evidence), substantive *ex parte* communications with grand jurors outside the jury room, excusal of dissenting grand jurors who disagreed with the government's case, and then a cover-up attempt to hide the prosecutorial misconduct via selective redactions in grand jury transcripts submitted to the court. If true as alleged, they are grave violations of Illinois' professional rules of conduct for attorneys that warrant the Commission's swift and full investigation.

Although this complaint does not purport to provide definitive evidence of which prosecutor engaged in which alleged act, the official record indicates that the [list](#) of federal prosecutors involved in the case includes the following individuals: [Sheri H. Mecklenburg](#), [William Robert Hogan Jr.](#), [Matthew D. Skiba](#), and [Andres Q. Almendarez](#). (Assistant U.S. Attorney Diane MacArthur was [designated](#) to represent the government in this case after the May 21 dismissals.)

That said, we urge the Commission to direct its investigative focus on U.S. Attorney [Andrew S. Boutros](#)' actions in particular, given that he led this prosecutorial team. As the district's chief federal law enforcement officer, Boutros bears primary responsibility for ordering, ratifying, or failing to reasonably remediate what may be a colossal breakdown of professional and ethical standards by his subordinates.

II. Specific Allegations of Prosecutorial Misconduct by the Broadview Six Prosecutorial Team

Summarizing the government's misconduct during the grand jury proceeding, Judge Perry stated the [following](#) on May 21 (p. 22-23):

Although I am not going to prejudge the issue without a hearing, I will say that I was incredibly shocked by the redactions that were made. I have read hundreds, if not thousands, of grand jury transcripts involving prosecutors who are the most junior of prosecutors to several U.S. Attorneys who appeared before the grand jury. I have never seen the types of prosecutorial behavior before a grand jury that I saw in those transcripts.

At a high-level summary for the defendants, who do not have the benefit of having seen the transcripts yet, several potential issues jumped out at me immediately and glaringly.

First, improper prosecutorial vouching to the grand jurors, with the AUSA putting her personal credibility and trustworthiness on the line in support of the charges.

Second, improper prosecutorial communications of a substantive nature with the grand jurors outside of the grand jury room.

And, third, the prosecutor excusing grand jurors who disagreed with the government's case from the deliberations process.

Which brings me to problem Number 4, which is the fact that all of this was redacted out of the versions of the transcripts that I got. And frankly, it is that that I find the most problematic. Mistakes happen. They happen to all of us. But as I tell my children, you own it. You admit to it. You apologize for it, and you move on. What you do not do is hide it.

A. "Vouching" for the Case

Under [Rule 3.4](#) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct regarding fairness to opposing party and counsel, attorneys — including government prosecutors licensed to practice in the state — are prohibited from putting their personal credibility and trustworthiness on the line in support of criminal charges. That is because when a prosecutor "vouches," they are leveraging the prestige and authority of the government to persuade the jury and effectively telling them to "trust me, I wouldn't bring these charges if they weren't guilty" rather than to independently assess the evidence or a witness's credibility. Vouching, as Judge Perry accused one of the prosecutors as having engaged in, bypasses the evidence and unfairly prejudices the jury, making it a clear violation of ethical standards. The grand jury transcripts released this week indeed [show](#) one of the prosecutors telling the jurors that "you know me and you trust me, and I would never ask you to charge somebody if I didn't think there was probable cause. . . .And I said 'I don't charge people unless I'm absolutely sure.'"

B. Ex Parte Communications

Under [Rule 3.5](#) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct regarding impartiality and decorum of the tribunal, attorneys are prohibited from communicating *ex parte* (one-sidedly without the opposing party's presence or awareness) with grand jurors unless specifically authorized by law or court order. The impact of *ex parte* communications is especially corrosive in the grand jury context where the government already presents its case without the defendant's legal team present.

Here, Judge Perry specifically noted that the government engaged in "improper" "substantive" communications about the Broadview Six case with "grand jurors outside of the grand jury room," which corrupts the integrity of the proceeding and introduces unrecorded, unchecked influence. Defense counsel Christopher Parente has separately [alleged](#) that "we believe the U.S. Attorney had personal contact with this grand jury." The grand jury transcripts [indicate](#) that at least one of the prosecutors admitted to *ex parte* contact with two grand jurors outside the jury room.

C. Removing Dissenting Jurors

The Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct impose a duty on all attorneys to uphold the integrity of the legal system, particularly [Rule 8.4](#), which states that it is professional misconduct to "engage in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice." [Rule 3.8](#) imposes additional professional responsibilities on prosecutors, whose duty is "to seek justice, not merely to convict" and to "act fairly, honestly, and honorably." As the Comment to Rule 3.8 explains, a prosecutor "has the responsibility of a minister of justice and not simply that of an advocate" — which carries with it "specific obligations to see that the defendant is accorded procedural justice."

These ethical obligations are why the government "excusing grand jurors who disagreed with the government's case from the deliberations process," as Judge Perry described in this case, sounded the alarm. The grand jury transcripts show that, in [one instance](#), one of the prosecutors dismissed a juror who said that "I heard this case like last week and I thought it was a crock of shit then and I still think it is." If government lawyers manipulated the composition of the grand jury to guarantee a specific outcome, they subverted the legal process in order to strip the defendants of their right to an impartial grand jury. Doing so crosses the line from vigorous prosecution to misconduct that seeks to bypass the evidence itself to manipulate the jurors, which ultimately damages the structural integrity of the grand jury system itself.

D. Duty of Candor

Numerous Rules of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct impose a duty of honesty and candor on attorneys:

- [Rule 3.3](#) (Candor Toward the Tribunal), which prohibits a lawyer from knowingly making a false statement of fact or law to a tribunal (with the failure to make a disclosure being the equivalent of an affirmative misrepresentation under certain circumstances, as Comment 3 notes);
- [Rule 4.1](#) (Truthfulness in Statements to Others), which bars a lawyer from knowingly making a false statement of material fact or law to a third person; and
- [Rule 8.4](#) (Misconduct), which prohibits conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation.

Here, Judge Perry pointedly referred to the Broadview Six prosecutors as having suspiciously hid evidence of their misconduct from earlier copies of grand jury transcripts. As she stated, "the fact that all of this was redacted out of the versions of the transcripts that I got" was "the most problematic" because the selective redactions represented an attempt to "hide" their mistakes and deceive the court.

E. Supervisory Responsibility

[Rule 5.1](#) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct requires U.S. Attorney Boutros, as the head of the Office of the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, to make reasonable

efforts to ensure that the prosecutors under his managerial authority comply with the Rules of Professional Conduct. As the chief prosecutor of this Office, Boutros is also responsible for his subordinate lawyers' violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct if he directs, ratifies, or fails to take remedial action to mitigate those ethical breaches.

While Boutros [claimed](#) that he was "unaware until recently" of the grand jury misconduct, any ignorance on his part would not excuse his failures. Indeed, if the U.S. Attorney truly did not know his prosecutors were running a rogue grand jury and redacting transcripts to hide it, that ignorance is itself evidence of a systemic failure to implement supervisory guardrails. As such, we ask the Commission to evaluate whether Boutros himself violated his supervisory obligations under Rule 5.1, as well as whether his own conduct in the matter, independent of his supervisory role, violated any of the aforementioned ethical standards.

III. Conclusion

Quoting *Berger v. United States*, 295 U.S. 78, 88 (1935), the Comment to Rule 3.8 explains the special duty of a federal prosecutor:

The United States Attorney is the representative not of an ordinary party to a controversy, but of a sovereignty whose obligation to govern impartially is as compelling as its obligation to govern at all; and whose interest, therefore, in a criminal prosecution is not that it shall win a case, but that justice shall be done. As such, he is in a peculiar and very definite sense the servant of the law, the twofold aim of which is that guilt shall not escape or innocence suffer. He may prosecute with earnestness and vigor -- indeed, he should do so. But, while he may strike hard blows, he is not at liberty to strike foul ones. It is as much his duty to refrain from improper methods calculated to produce a wrongful conviction as it is to use every legitimate means to bring about a just one.

We are deeply troubled by the serious allegations of wrongdoing facing the Broadview Six prosecutors, the evidence for which prompted the presiding judge to excoriate them on the record and openly raise the possibility of sanctions for prosecutorial misconduct. If true as alleged, these prosecutors violated not only the defendants' basic rights but also their special duty to the public. We further note that the government's effort to prosecute the Broadview Six unfolded amid the Trump Administration's severe crackdown on protests across the country against its immigration enforcement policy — making it especially important for prosecutors to be held accountable for abusing their powers to chill dissent and criticism of the government.

In light of the allegations presented in this letter, along with applicable laws and rules for licensed attorneys and federal prosecutors, we respectfully ask you to initiate an investigation as expeditiously as possible and the appropriate disciplinary proceedings, including and up to disbarment. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Common Cause Illinois
Demand Progress Education Fund