



VIOLA DAVIS  
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*HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES*  
COVERDELL LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
ROOM 404  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334  
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404-651-8086 (FAX)

STANDING COMMITTEES  
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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY  
NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT

January 7, 2022

State Bar of Georgia  
Office of the General Counsel  
104 Marietta Street, N.W., Suite 100  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

To Whom It May Concern:

A law license is a privilege and not a right. This letter is a formal complaint submitted to the State Bar of Georgia by Representative Viola Davis, Representative Rhonda Burnough, Representative Kim Schofield, and Representative Sandra G. Scott requesting the censure of Kevin Gough, the defense attorney for William "Roddie" Bryan who was on trial with Travis McMichael and his father, Greg McMichael for the murder of Ahmaud Arbery. Attorney Kevin Gough violated standards of ethical conduct and professional integrity with racially insensitive motions and statements causing public backlash due to the statements being racist, inflammatory, offensive, etc. He failed to treat Ahmaud Arbery's family, friends, and supportive clergy with respect and equal justice under the law. He also failed to treat Ahmaud Arbery's family, friends, and supportive clergy fairly and with dignity.

The trial of Ahmaud Arbery demonstrated a historic and profound abuse of the judicial process and disenfranchised Arbery's civil and constitutional rights. The Attorneys involved in this case must be held accountable for violation of professional conduct and abuse of the judicial system to include:

1. Attorney Kevin Gough has failed to conform to standards of ethical conduct required of practitioners as the bar of any court of which he is a member;
2. Attorney Kevin Gough is lacking in character or professional integrity evidenced by making a motion to restrict black pastors from the courtroom. Attorney Gough said, "**We don't want any more Black pastors coming in here**".
3. Attorney Kevin Gough likened a large courthouse rally supporting Ahmaud Arbery's family to a "**public lynching**" of the white defendants. This statement and others were viewed as outrageous, racist, inflammatory, and offensive, especially when the foundations of the statements were directed to Black pastors.
4. Judge Timothy Walmsley ruled against Gough's request to bar black ministers from the public courtroom and Gough ultimately apologized for his remarks after public backlash.
5. Attorney Kevin Gough engaged in conduct that the average lawyer knows or reasonably should know is discriminatory on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status in conduct related to the practice of law evidenced by requesting Black pastors be barred from the public courtroom.

We have concerns that this historic case exposed the deep seated racial disparities in the law relating to hate crime murder and the fair trials of African Americans. As elected officials, we want to ensure that Georgians receive fair and equitable treatment in the judicial system, and measures are in place to hold people accountable when Georgians'

constitutional rights are violated. This includes the public's access to the courthouse, especially Black pastors.

For these reasons, we request Attorney Kevin Gough be censured. Please feel free to contact us for any further details that may help implement this request for Gough to be censured. We ask that you contact me, Representative Viola Davis, at 404-656-0109 or via email at [viola.davis@house.ga.gov](mailto:viola.davis@house.ga.gov).

With Kindest Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Viola Davis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Representative Viola Davis

/s/ Rep. Viola Davis (D-Stone Mountain)

/s/ Rep. Rhonda Burnough (D-Riverdale)

/s/ Rep. Kim Schofield (D-Atlanta)

/s/ Rep. Sandra Scott (D-Rex)

Attachment





# STATE BAR OF GEORGIA

## GRIEVANCE

### CONFIDENTIAL

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY IN BLACK INK ONLY  
DO NOT ALTER THIS FORM

YOUR NAME: Rep. Viola Davis

MAILING ADDRESS: Coverdell Legis. Office Bldg Atlanta Ga. 30334  
Street or P.O. Box City State Zip

YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS: Viola.Davis@house.ga.gov

YOUR PHONE NUMBERS: (H/CELL) 678-349-6835 (W) 404-656-0109

NAME OF THE ATTORNEY: Mr. Kevin Robert Gough  
Fill out a separate form for each attorney. Do not list law firms.

ADDRESS OF THE ATTORNEY: P.O. Box 898, Brunswick, Georgia 31521

DATE OF FIRST CONTACT WITH ATTORNEY: N/A DATE OF LAST CONTACT WITH ATTORNEY: N/A

DOES THIS ATTORNEY CURRENTLY REPRESENT YOU? YES  NO  WAS THIS YOUR ATTORNEY? YES  NO

IS YOUR CASE: CRIMINAL  CIVIL  CASE # N/A

COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_ OR FEDERAL DISTRICT: NORTHERN  MIDDLE  SOUTHERN

**CLEARLY DESCRIBE YOUR COMPLAINT AND ATTACH SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:**

Requesting the censure of Kevin Gough for violating standards of ethical conduct and professional integrity with racially insensitive motions and statements causing public backlash due to statements being racist, inflammatory, offensive, etc.

If more space is needed, please attach other pages. Please do not write on the back.

Return to: State Bar of Georgia  
Office of the General Counsel  
104 Marietta St. NW, Suite 100  
Atlanta, GA 30303

"I affirm that I have read and understand the information and instructions. The information I have provided here is true to the best of my knowledge."  
SIGNATURE: Viola Davis  
DATE: 7 Jan 2021

**OPTIONAL: PLEASE PROVIDE THE NAME AND PHONE NUMBER OF SOMEONE WE CAN CONTACT IF WE HAVE DIFFICULTY CONTACTING YOU.**

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON: Rep. Sandra Scott

PHONE NUMBERS OF CONTACT PERSON: (H) 404-656-0314 (CELL) \_\_\_\_\_

## EXHIBIT A

### DOCUMENTS, ARTICLES, AND VIDEO EVIDENCE

1. **November 11, 2021** - "LAWYER IN ARBERY CASE: 'WE DON'T WANT ANY MORE BLACK PASTORS' IN COURT" BY SHADDI ABUSAID AND BILL RANKIN, THE ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION - <https://www.ajc.com/news/atlanta-news/attorney-in-arbery-case-we-dont-want-any-more-black-pastors/FGGWOKUWARCQVCFUZW3C7KIKE/>
2. **VIDEO** – "ATTORNEY KEVIN GOUGH CONFRONTED ABOUT 'BLACK PASTORS' COMMENT – ON THURSDAY, DEFENSE ATTORNEY KEVIN GOUGH SAID NO MORE 'BLACK PASTORS' SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO COME INTO THE COURTROOM DURING THE TRIAL OF THE THREE MEN ACCUSED OF KILLING AHMAUD ARBERY. <https://youtu.be/Hg7O4hUXYVA>
3. **VIDEO** - "HOW WILL ATTORNEY KEVIN GOUGH'S 'BLACK PASTORS' COMMENT PLAY OUT? TESTIMONIES RESUME IN THE TRIAL OF THE THREE WHITE MEN WHO ALLEGEDLY CHASED DOWN, STALKED THEN SHOT AND KILLED 25-YEAR-OLD AHMAUD ARBERY IN BRUNSWICK, GEORGIA. <https://youtu.be/2NezfpZVsrU>
4. **VIDEO** - "CUOMO PRESSES DEFENSE ATTORNEY: WHY MAKE THIS PERSONAL ABOUT AHMAUD ARBERY?" CNN'S CHRIS CUOMO PRESSES DEFENSE ATTORNEY KEVIN GOUGH OVER HIS ATTEMPT TO BAN BLACK PASTORS FROM THE COURTROOM DURING THE TRIAL FOR THE KILLING OF AHMAUD ARBERY. <https://www.cnn.com/videos/us/2021/11/24/kevin-gough-ahmaud-arbery-murder-trial-sot-cpt-vpx.cnn>



5. **NOVEMBER 17, 2021** - "CALL TO REMOVE BLACK PASTORS ADDS TO AGONY IN ARBERY'S TOWN" BY JEFFREY COLLINS AND JAY REEVES WITH APNEWS.COM - <https://apnews.com/article/ahmaud-arbery-crime-shootings-georgia-race-and-ethnicity-1e87b4951883d5c7c479d38989376092>
  
6. **VIDEO** - "ATTORNEY KEVIN GOUGH FILES ANOTHER MOTION TO HAVE BLACK PASTOR" – DEFENSE ATTORNEY KEVIN GOUGH FILES ANOTHER MOTION TO HAVE REV. AL SHARPTON AND REV. JESSE JACKSON BANNED FROM THE COURTROOM IN THE TRAIL OF THE THREE MEN ACCUSED OF KILLING AHMAUD ARBERY.  
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1312596462510837>
  
7. **VIDEO** - "BASS CALLS 'BLACK PASTORS' COMMENT DURING ARBERY TRIAL 'DESPICABLE'" BY MYCHAEL SCHNELL – REP. KAREN BASS (D-CALIF.) ON SUNDAY SAID THE "BLACK PASTORS" COMMENT MADE BY A DEFENSE ATTORNEY REPRESENTING ONE OF THE MEN CHARGED WITH MURDERING AHMAUD ARBERY WAS 'DESPICABLE'.  
[HTTPS://THEHILL.COM/HOMENEWS/SUNDAY-TALK-SHOWS/581482-BASS-CALLS-BLACK-PASTORS-COMMENT-DURING-ARBERY-TRIAL-DESPICABLE](https://thehill.com/homenews/sunday-talk-shows/581482-bass-calls-black-pastors-comment-during-arbery-trial-despicable)