

# FormanWatkins

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August 2, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Attorney General Lynn Fitch  
Office of Criminal Investigations  
P.O. Box 220  
Jackson, Mississippi 39205  
[investigations@ago.ms.gov](mailto:investigations@ago.ms.gov)

District Attorney Brad R. Thompson  
Jones County  
P.O. Box 313  
Laurel, Mississippi 39441  
[bthompson@jonesda.com](mailto:bthompson@jonesda.com)

*Re: Request to Investigate Chris McDaniel for Voter Fraud*

Dear General Fitch and District Attorney Thompson,

I represent Delbert Hosemann's campaign. It has come to our attention that State Senator Chris McDaniel for many years has been registered to vote and voted using an address at which he does not reside. We formally request that you immediately open an investigation into whether Mr. McDaniel has violated the law in so doing.

Mr. McDaniel is reportedly registered to vote using the following address: 506 South Court St., Ellisville, Mississippi 39437. According to recent reports and witness accounts, however, Mr. McDaniel, nor anyone else, has resided at that address for several years. *See* attached.

As you know, an individual may vote only in the voting district and precinct where they reside. Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-11. If an individual attempts to vote in a precinct where they do not reside, their vote may be properly challenged and rejected. *Id.* at § 23-15-571(3)(d). Votes cast in elections other than where the voter resides are not lawful and must not be counted. *Opinion to Joseph M. Shepard*, Docket No. 2003-0345 (Mississippi A.G. July 14, 2003).

More importantly, under Mississippi law, it is a crime to register and/or vote in a voting district and precinct other than where one lives. Miss. Code Ann. §§ 97-13-25 and 97-13-35. And Mississippi law imposes strict and detailed requirements on the enforcement of these laws. *E.g., id.* at § 23-15-17 (if law enforcement determines an individual does not reside where he or she is registered to vote, the voter registrar must act to reject or accept the voter's registration *within twenty-four hours* of receiving the report from law enforcement).

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As you know, in 2018, the Mississippi Attorney General and the Forrest County District Attorney prosecuted a potentially very similar case involving an individual named Cory Ferraez. Mr. Ferraez, who was a candidate for the state legislature the previous year, eventually pled guilty to continuing to vote in a district where he no longer resided. As a result, Mr. Ferraez was sentenced to six months in prison and issued a monetary fine.

We respectfully request that your offices immediately investigate these matters and ensure compliance with and enforcement of Mississippi law. And, given that there is a primary election on August 8, 2023, and Mr. McDaniel will likely once again seek to cast a vote in that election using the South Court St. address, we further request that this investigation conclude before August 8 to prevent Mississippi law from being broken.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information. Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

/s/ Spencer M. Ritchie

SPENCER M. RITCHIE



## **MCDANIEL NOT TO BE TRUSTED**

By TIM KALICH - Greenwood Commonwealth

Fri, 07/28/23-6:12PM, 1,221 Reads 6,796 Statewide

There are a few issues in which I agree with Chris McDaniel.

Like him, I am disappointed that the Mississippi Senate, under the leadership of Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann, has been an obstacle to restoring the initiative process that citizens had for three decades until the Mississippi Supreme Court killed it in 2021 over a technicality.

I also agree that the state's regressively high sales tax on groceries should be cut, if not eliminated, although McDaniel goes too far in his tax-cutting ambitions by wanting to get rid of the personal income tax at the same time.

The money to operate state government has to come from somewhere. You either have to tax income or consumption, or, as is the current situation in Mississippi, tax some of both. It may sound great on the political stump to talk about slashing taxes, but if you go too far, eventually essential government services suffer.

What bothers me most, though, about McDaniel is that I don't trust him.

During his Republican primary challenge to Hosemann, there has been a lot written and said about McDaniel's apparent violation of state campaign finance laws.

This past week at the Neshoba County Fair, Attorney General Lynn Fitch was pressed about why she has not done more to investigate the complaints, filed by Hosemann, about the matter.

Hosemann, as a former secretary of state, knows a thing or two about Mississippi's campaign finance laws. But it didn't take an expert in the laws to conclude that McDaniel's campaign wasn't even close to following them.

His political action committee took in a \$475,000 donation from a

Virginia-based nonprofit corporation that doesn't disclose its donors. Bad enough that McDaniel, who claims to champion greater disclosure on political contributions, was OK with hiding who was trying to bankroll his campaign. Even worse, the contribution was grossly over the legal limit — \$474,000 over, to be exact.

McDaniel's PAC eventually returned the money, but not before it had first funneled most of it to his campaign and got caught trying to obfuscate the money trail through incomplete and inaccurate campaign finance reports that McDaniel tried to blame on "clerical errors."

That's the thing about McDaniel and the folks who surround him. When things don't add up, they either don't answer the questions or they try to deflect them with nonsense.

Another example was recently provided by William Browning, a former Commonwealth reporter who now writes occasional freelance pieces and also posts some of his work to an online "newsletter" that he maintains.

Browning lives in Ellisville, the same small Jones County town where McDaniel claims to live. McDaniel's state Senate bio lists 506 South Court St. as his home, and it's also where he has been registered to vote since 2009.

There's no question that McDaniel owns the residence. What Browning questioned is whether the legislator or anyone else ever stays there.

"In four-plus years I've never seen any activity at the home," writes Browning. "Curtains are always drawn. No lights ever appear on. The backyard gazebo ... looks abandoned."

When Browning sent McDaniel some questions about the situation, the Republican's campaign team responded that the house on South Court Street "remains occupied and central to the McDaniel family's daily lives." The campaign added that McDaniel and his family spend nights elsewhere at an undisclosed location because the house in Ellisville has black mold and poses a health risk to his two sons, but that the problem is being addressed by contractors.

"While renovations are underway to protect the health and safety of my children, our home is visited daily by my family," McDaniel said in a

statement provided by his campaign. “It remains our legal domicile, and we have no intent of ever abandoning our forever home.”

Being a good reporter, Browning didn’t accept all of that at face value. For one, he’s never seen any contractors or work being done at the house, which he frequently passes on his way to the neighborhood grocery. So he made a public records request for McDaniel’s water records from the town.

McDaniel’s water meter, according to Browning, had the same reading from December 2017 to February 2018, and then the account was closed for a year. It was reopened shortly after McDaniel announced in 2019 that he would be running for reelection to his state Senate seat, but the next four years showed little to no water consumption. In fact, for 34 months, from May 2020 through March 2023, the last month Browning looked at, the meter reading did not change.

Writes Browning: “I asked McDaniel’s campaign about this, pointing out that it seemed odd that such a small amount of water, if any, had been used at the address in years, especially since McDaniel claims the home is visited daily. His campaign did not respond.”

It also didn’t answer whether McDaniel’s “not forever home” is inside the district from which he was elected.

Those are not hard questions — unless, of course, you don’t want the answers to be known.

- Contact Tim **KALICH** at 662-581-7243 or [tkalich@gwcommonwealth.com](mailto:tkalich@gwcommonwealth.com) (<mailto:tkalich@gwcommonwealth.com>).

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<https://www.northsidesun.com/columns-opinion/mcdaniel-not-be-trusted-64c44b437b53c>

**WANT TO CONTACT THE AUTHOR?**

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# 55. Sen. Chris McDaniel is registered to vote at an address that appears to have used no water for three years.

WILLIAM BROWNING

JUL 19, 2023



Share

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Since political season in Mississippi is getting hotter by the day I wanted to share something I discovered recently about a candidate for statewide office.

Sen. Chris McDaniel (R-Ellisville) has represented District 42 in the Mississippi Legislature since 2008. I moved to Ellisville, which is in that district, several years ago. Shortly after I did, I noticed McDaniel's home address, as listed on the state Legislature's website, appeared unoccupied.

# Mississippi State Senate

## Chris McDaniel

District 42 - Forrest, Jones

Republican

### Legislative Experience:

2008-present

### Education:

Jones County Junior College  
William Carey University  
University of Mississippi  
School of Law

### Occupation:

Attorney, Partner of Hortman,  
Harlow, Bassi, Robinson and  
McDaniel, PLLC.

### Committee Membership:

- Environment Prot, Cons and Water Res - Chair
- Ethics - Vice-Chair
- Accountability, Efficiency, Transparency
- Drug Policy
- Energy
- Enrolled Bills
- Finance
- Judiciary, Division A
- Judiciary, Division B
- Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks



Senator McDaniel is a member of the Gideons International, Mississippi Leadership Forum, Mississippi Economic Council, Association for Excellence in Education, National Rifle Association, American Family Association, Jones County Bar Association. Mississippi Defense



**Contact Information:**

Capitol:

Room: 213

P. O. Box 1018

Jackson, MS 39215

(601)359-4088

Lawyers Association, Mississippi Claims Association, Fifth Federal Circuit Bar Association, the Hundred Club of Jones County, Federalist Society, Mississippi Bar, Rotary Club, Exchange, Hundred Club and Mississippi Leadership Forum.

Home:

506 South Court

Ellisville, MS 39437

(601)477-2291 (H)

(601)649-8611 (W)

(601)649-6062 (F)

Senator McDaniel was born June 28, 1971 in Laurel, and he is married to Jill Tullos McDaniel. They have two boys Cambridge and Chamberlain. He is of the Baptist faith.

Email:

[cmcdaniel@senate.ms.gov](mailto:cmcdaniel@senate.ms.gov)

That address—506 South Court Street in Ellisville—is less than a mile from my home, and a block from a neighborhood grocery. In four-plus years I’ve never seen any activity at the home. Curtains are always drawn. No lights ever appear on. The backyard gazebo, where McDaniel says he prayed about entering the 2014 U.S. Senate race, looks abandoned. Also, other Ellisville residents have told me over the years that the place is unoccupied. I just scratched my head about it until earlier this year when McDaniel announced he was running for lieutenant governor—one of the most powerful elected offices in Mississippi. Being an old reporter, I decided to check it out.



In March I called the Jones County Circuit Clerk's office and asked where McDaniel was registered to vote. I was told he has been registered at 506 South Court Street in Ellisville since 2009. I checked property records, which indicated that the house on South Court Street is the only house McDaniel owns in Jones County. Then I emailed McDaniel and asked why he was registered to vote at a house that appeared unoccupied. I added that I planned to write about it in my newsletter.

McDaniel's campaign team responded and said the house on South Court Street "remains occupied and central to the McDaniel family's daily lives." His campaign team said 506 South Court Street is McDaniel's "legal domicile," that he has owned it for more than 23 years, that clothes hang in closets, that furnishings are in place, that mail is received there and that McDaniel has no plans to ever abandon the house.

The campaign added, however, that McDaniel and his family have been "forced to spend nights elsewhere" since black mold was discovered in the home, and they won't be able to spend nights there again until contractors address the problem. It is a family health matter, his campaign explained, which is certainly understandable (though I've never noticed contractors or any work being done at the property). When I asked when McDaniel stopped spending nights at the home, his campaign offered no date.

His campaign added that because of McDaniel's legislative duties, he and his family sometimes spend nights in/near Jackson. When I asked where they stayed when the Legislature was not in session, the campaign did not respond. I explained that I did

not want or expect an address but was curious if McDaniel spent nights in Ellisville and/or in District 42 or elsewhere. His campaign did not say.

The campaign sent this statement from McDaniel: “Ellisville is currently and will always be my family’s home—where I intend to grow old in our home on South Center [sic] Street. While renovations are underway to protect the health and safety of my children, our home is visited daily by my family. It remains our legal domicile, and we have no intent of ever abandoning our forever home.”

McDaniel’s campaign team mentioned, too, that 506 South Court Street has electricity and running water. So in April I submitted a Public Records Act request to the city of Ellisville, asking for copies of the water bill at 506 South Court Street from January 2018 to March 2023.

According to the records I received from the city, the water meter had the same reading from Dec. 2017 to Feb. 2018. Then, in March 2018, the account in McDaniel’s name at 506 South Court Street was closed, according to the records I received from the city. I asked McDaniel’s team why the account would have been closed. I did not receive a response.

I know that in late Feb. 2018, McDaniel announced that he would run for the U.S. Senate. He lost that race in Nov. 2018. There was speculation in early 2019 that he would run for governor but in late Feb. 2019 he announced he would seek re-election to the state Senate District 42 seat. Less than two weeks later, someone paid a \$45 deposit to open a water account in McDaniel’s name at 506 South Court Street, according to the records I received from the city.

From April 2019 to April 2020, the water meter at 506 South Court Street registered water use in four months: Approximately 2,000 gallons in April 2019; approximately 1,000 gallons in May 2019; approximately 4,000 gallons in October 2019; and approximately 1,000 gallons in April 2020, according to the records I received from the city.

According to those same records, the meter reading at 506 South Court Street stayed the same from May 2020 through March 2023. That would indicate that if any water was used at the property during those 34 months, it amounted to less than 1,000 gallons total. (The EPA says the average American household uses 300-plus gallons a day.) Or perhaps the meter faltered.

I asked McDaniel's campaign about this, pointing out that it seemed odd that such a small amount of water, if any, had been used at the address in years, especially since McDaniel claims the home is visited daily. His campaign did not respond.

McDaniel is challenging incumbent lieutenant governor Delbert Hosemann in the Republican primary. A statewide vote will be held Aug. 8.

## Comments



Write a comment...