



# News Release

For Immediate Release

## Press Release Pocomoke Police Wrongful Termination

July 22, 2015

**WASHINGTON, DC** - Wiley Rein LLP has joined with the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs (WLC) to represent Kelvin Sewell, former police chief of Pocomoke City, Maryland, following his unlawful dismissal from his position by Mayor Bruce Morrison on Monday, June 29. Andrew G. McBride, chair of Wiley Rein's Communications Appellate & Litigation Practice, is co-counsel for WLC in the matter.

Following Mr. Sewell's termination, there was an outcry from members of the local community, who questioned the transparency and legality of the action. In a letter drafted by Wiley Rein, which was read at a July 13 community rally in support of the former police chief, Mr. Sewell claims he was subject to "racial discrimination and unlawful retaliation for protected conduct under federal civil rights law." The letter also notes that there are "documented numerous instances of a hostile work environment for African-American police officers" in Pocomoke, and cited Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlaws discrimination in employment.

"This is one of the most egregious cases of primary racial discrimination and retaliation for assertion of rights before the EEOC that I've seen," said Mr. McBride in a July 18 [story](#) in *The Washington Post*. "Chief Sewell has a fantastic record as a police officer. He was terminated because he stood up for two African American officers who filed an EEOC complaint."

The WLC—from its inception in 1968—has been mobilizing the resources of the private bar to address issues of civil rights violations and poverty in our community. Its efforts and programs have expanded from a small staff focused primarily on issues of racial discrimination into a far larger organization providing pro bono representation in a broad range of civil rights and related poverty issues impacting every group protected by our federal, state and local civil rights laws. As part of its own comprehensive pro bono program, Wiley Rein works regularly together with WLC on a variety of matters throughout the year.

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