(6/29/10): Ohio Ethics Commission Could Rule on Bortz Today

A lawyer for the Ohio Ethics Commission warned Chris Bortz in June of 2009 that he had a conflict of interest with the Streetcar project. However, Bortz hung his hat on city lawyers opinion instead of complying with the Ohio Ethics Commission's lawyer. "This was a conscious choice by Council Member Chris Bortz to break the law. The Ohio Ethics Commission has no choice but to find Bortz in violation of Ohio ethics laws and require his resignation," Christopher Smitherman, President of the Cincinnati NAACP says.

June 29, 2010.Cincinnati NAACPMedia Release..The Ohio Ethics Commission will meet today in Columbus, Ohio. The Ohio Ethics Commission will spend time in executive session deciding how the commission will handle ethics violations across the State of Ohio. Council Member Chris Bortz most likely is an agenda item for the commission. A lawyer for the Ohio Ethics Commission warned Chris Bortz in June of 2009 that he had a conflict of interest with the Streetcar project. Council Member Bortz did not like the Ohio Ethics Commission decision so he intentionally requested that city lawyers provide him an opinion. Bortz is a lawyer and understood that city lawyers had no jurisdiction on deciding Ohio law regarding ethics violations. However, Bortz hung his hat on city lawyers opinion instead of complying with the Ohio Ethics Commission's lawyer. "This was a conscious choice by Council Member Chris Bortz to break the law. The Ohio Ethics Commission has no choice but to find Bortz in violation of Ohio ethics laws and require his resignation," Christopher Smitherman, President of the Cincinnati NAACP says. .Bortz argues that he is simply an employee of Towne Properties. Also, Bortz argues he is only the chief legal council for Town Properties. Mr. Bortz is the owners son. City of Cincinnati tax dollars called TIF are pouring through Towne Properties. This is a major conflict of interest for Council Member Chris Bortz. "I was shocked to see Chris Bortz throw Roxanne Qualls under the bus by attempting to compare a condo she owns on the streetcar line and a massive real estate portfolio he and his family control on the streetcar line," Smitherman says.