

In-Depth Extra.

Read today in the ePaper.

## Milton councilman cited for ethics violations sues resident who filed complaint



**NORTH FULTON COUNTY**

By [Adrianne Murchison](#), The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

3 hours ago

---

**The lawsuit may discourage citizens from speaking out against elected officials.**

---

Advertisement



A Milton official who was found to have committed ethics violations last year is seeking to have the decision reversed and has filed a lawsuit against the resident who made the ethics complaint.

Advertisement

Councilman Paul Moore is asking the Fulton County Superior Court to review and reverse findings of the Milton ethics panel. The lawsuit also seeks financial compensation for attorney's fees spent during the panel investigation.

Advertisement



Moore's appeal says that the Milton ethics panel erred in its decision that [he had a conflict of interest when he participated in a discussion during a City Council meeting last spring](#). He spent more than \$5,000 on legal fees, he says.

*Article continues below*



By Alpine Helen White County

#### ADVERTISER CONTENT

An adventure awaits you just 2 hours from Atlanta

Resident Tony Palazzo filed the ethics complaint against Moore and says the councilman's lawsuit discourages citizens from speaking out against elected officials.

"I never in my wildest dreams would have expected this is where we would be ... sued after Councilman Moore losing in the ethics hearing," Palazzo said. "I don't regret doing it. I just never imagined in my wildest dreams this is how the process would play out."

ADVERTISING





Moore did not return a call to the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and his attorney Doug Chalmers declined to comment.

Moore's attorneys filed his appeal to the ethics panel's findings through a writ of certiorari in November. A hearing is scheduled in Fulton County Superior Court in May to consider a motion by Palazzo's attorney Josh Belinfante to dismiss the lawsuit. The motion says Moore's team did not file legal action within the required time period.

#### Advertisement

The Milton City Council and the Milton ethics panel are named in the lawsuit but are not a part of the litigation, city attorney Ken Jarrard said.

#### Advertisement

An advertisement for a lecture titled "Critical Race Theory: What It Is and How to Fight It" by Christopher F. Rufo. The ad features a red background with a white text box. It includes a small photo of Christopher F. Rufo and a bio. Below the main text box is a section titled "Critical Race Theory" with a small icon of a building and a right arrow button.

**Critical Race Theory: What It Is and How to Fight It**

Christopher F. Rufo  
Founder and Director, Battlefront

**CHRISTOPHER F. RUFO** is founder and director of Battlefront, a public policy research center. He is a graduate of Georgetown University and a former Lincoln Fellow at the Claremont Institute for the Study of Statesmanship and Political Philosophy. As executive director at the Documentary Foundation, he has directed four films for PBS, including most recently *America Lost*, which explores life in Youngstown, Ohio, Memphis, Tennessee, and Stockton, California. He is also a contributing editor of *City Journal*, where he covers topics including critical race theory, homelessness, addiction, and crime.

*The following is adapted from a lecture delivered at Hillsdale College on March 30, 2021.*

**Critical Race Theory**

The meaning and threat of critical race theory. How to oppose and defeat it

"We are bystanders," Jarrard said. "Our job was to assemble documents and get them to superior court. The case is argued by Palazzo and Moore as to whether (the ethics panel) findings should be upheld or reversed."

Moore and Palazzo both reside in White Columns subdivision. The problem between them arose last spring when Moore did not remove himself from a City Council discussion on partially reimbursing White Columns homeowners' association \$6,800 for the cost of controversial speed radar signs that had been installed in the neighborhood.

Palazzo is president of the homeowners association, but his ethics complaint was filed independent of the organization.

“What I saw occur with Councilman Moore was effectively a politician putting his private interests ahead of public needs,” said Palazzo, who operates a private equity firm.

“I think its disappointing from the citizen perspective,” he said of the lawsuit. “Because if you can’t come forward and point out wrongdoing of an elected official then who’s going to do it?”

Following last year’s decision that Moore violated municipal and city code of ethics, [the ethics panel recommended that City Council issue a written reprimand](#). But Mayor Peyton Jamison and fellow council members voted to take no action and agreed that Moore had been “sufficiently sanctioned” already.

Moore is Milton’s current mayor pro tem. He states in an affidavit for his lawsuit that he has suffered financial loss and damage to his communications business and personal reputation as a result of the ethics investigation and findings.

Moore’s firm, Midland Communications, lobbies government officials on issues related to the offshore wind industry. Since the ethics investigation, his access to government officials has decreased, he said in the lawsuit.

## About the Author

---





## Adrianne Murchison

Adrianne Murchison covers local government in north Fulton County for The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

## Editors' Picks

---



Georgia linebacker arrested on reckless driving, racing charges

16h ago



Kemp moves to take command of GOP, leaving state party behind

8h ago

---