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Sunday, April 9, 2000

Dismissed pathologist gets \$250,000 whistleblower judgment

HOUSTON (AP) - A federal jury has awarded \$250,000 to a former Harris County pathologist who claims she was fired in 1998 for exposing alleged illegal activity in the medical examiner's office.

Key Info

It is the second time a jury has sided with a fired worker from the medical examiner's office who crossed Dr. Joye Carter to report problems in that county office.

Key Info

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The pathologist, Marilyn Murr Doyle, said she was grateful for the award.

"I did what was right, and I feel like they backed me up," Doyle told the Houston Chronicle. "I feel like justice has been done."

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Doyle testified that she went to Carter on Jan. 5, 1998, with concerns that Dr. Delbert Van Dusen was performing autopsies without a Texas medical license.

Key Info

Although Carter said Van Dusen's activities were within legal boundaries, Doyle took the matter to Harris County District Attorney John B. Holmes Jr. four days later.

Arti C

www.tsc.state.tx.us/OPINIONS/tccc/PDF/023/pave.pdf

Her report spurred an investigation, which she discussed anonymously with a Houston Chronicle reporter in a Jan. 16, 1998, article.

Key Info Though not named publicly by Holmes or the newspaper, Carter knew Doyle gave the interview and sparked the investigation, Doyle claimed. Carter fired Doyle two months later.

F. Clinton Gambill II, the county's attorney, said he will ask U.S. District Judge Melinda Harmon to throw out the jury verdict because of contradictory evidence presented at trial.

Jurors deliberated about six hours before reaching a decision.

Key Info In November 1998, the county agreed to paid Dr. Elizabeth "Libby" Johnson a \$375,000 settlement.

Key Info Johnson sued the county in March 1997, contending that Carter fired her for reporting potentially illegal cover-ups and sabotage at the office. *Key Info*

texnews.com	Reporter OnLine	Local News	Texas News
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