

# CATION

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defendant in light of the ongoing grand jury investigation of his financial transactions."

U.S. Attorney J. William Roberts said he cannot confirm the grand jury probe because he is "advisedly in the dark on the whole thing."

The federal prosecutor said he long ago opted out of any such proceeding on ethical grounds, because he has a personal friendship with Cation dating to when he was a Republican state's attorney in Sangamon County.

"I have found him to be a good guy," Roberts said of Cation. "He's always been kind to me, and I'm not sure I could be objective."

The U.S. attorney referred questions on the investigation to an another federal prosecutor in Danville; Frances Hulin, who refused to comment.

Peoria attorney James Broadway confirmed that he represents Cation before a federal grand jury, but he refused to comment further.

When Cation left Peoria last fall, he left behind a decades-old legacy of civic contributions, community commendations and political influence.

A prominent local attorney, he also served as an assistant Illinois attorney general, chairman of the Peoria County Bar Association, president of the Peoria Public Library and chairman of the Methodist Medical Center board of trustees.

In addition, he was a long standing Republican leader who organized several campaigns to re-elect Michel, the highest-ranking GOP member of the U.S. House.

As a Peoria County Republican leader, Cation was influential in selecting candidates for the local GOP ticket and in nominating attorneys for state and federal judgeships.

Ray Lalood, a Michel aide in Peoria, said the congressman continues to talk with Cation from time to time but knows nothing about the grand jury investigation.

"I'm glad that he has not discussed his legal problems with anybody from this office, including the congressman," Lalood said.

After Cation relocated to Chicago, Michel arranged for his friend to begin working for the General Services Administration.

According to his divorce files, Cation lives in a two-bedroom apartment near downtown Chicago and earns about \$30,000 a year as an assistant to the regional administrator of the government agency.

Regional administrator Richard G. Austin said his new assistant serves in a "quasi-administrative" position, functioning at times as an agency liaison and internal troubleshooter.

The GSA is an agency that manages federal government buildings and performs other administrative tasks.

Austin said Cation performs no legal work for the agency and probably is grossly underpaid, considering his legal expertise.

The senior partner of Cation's former law firm in Peoria, Donald Vonachen, said he has not been contacted by the FBI and knows nothing about the grand jury investigation of his former partner.