JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF THE
TENTH CIRCUIT

IN RE: CHARGE OF JUDICIAL MISCONDUCT	No. 10-09-90022

Before **HENRY**, Chief Judge.

ORDER OF DISMISSAL

Complainant has filed a complaint of judicial misconduct against a district judge in this circuit. My consideration of this complaint is governed by 1) the misconduct rules issued by the Judicial Conference of the United States, entitled *Rules for Judicial-Conduct and Judicial-Disability Proceedings* (the "Misconduct Rules"); 2) the federal statute dealing with judicial misconduct, 28 U.S.C. § 351 *et seq.*, and 3) the "Breyer Report," a study by the Judicial Conduct and Disability Act Study Committee, headed by Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer, entitled *Implementation of the Judicial Conduct and Disability Act of 1980*. The Breyer Report may be found at: http://www.supremecourtus.gov/publicinfo/ breyercommitteereport.pdf. To the extent that any relevant prior decisions of the full Judicial Council of this circuit consistent with those authorities exist, they may also govern my consideration of this complaint.

Complainant has received or has access to a copy of the misconduct rules. In accord with those rules, the names of the complainant and subject judge shall not be disclosed in this order. *See* Misconduct Rule 11(g)(2).

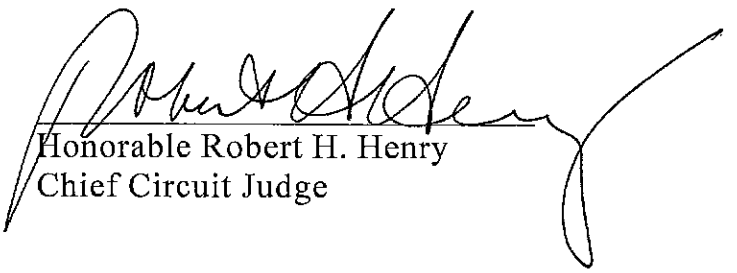
Complainant takes issue with a ruling by the subject judge denying complainant's request to proceed in forma pauperis in an underlying prisoner civil rights case. Complainant sets out argument about the merits of the underlying case, and accuses the judge of both bias and conspiracy to deny complainant access to the courts. To the extent that complainant challenges the judge's ruling or sets out arguments about the merits of the underlying case, these claims are not cognizable as misconduct because they are "directly related to the merits of a decision or procedural ruling." Misconduct Rule 11(c)(1)(B). As explained in the Breyer Report, this exclusion of matters related to the merits of underlying cases protects the independence of the judges deciding those cases. *See* Breyer Report, App. E., ¶ 2.

While allegations of conspiracy and bias can state valid claims of misconduct even when the allegations relate to a judge's ruling, *see* Commentary to Misconduct Rule 3, these claims also fail because they are completely unsupported. The Misconduct Rules require complainants to support their allegations with "sufficient evidence to raise an inference that misconduct has occurred." *See* Misconduct Rule 11(c)(1)(D). Complainant's claims of conspiracy and bias are based only on the judge's ifp ruling and speculation.

Accordingly, this complaint is dismissed pursuant to Misconduct Rule 11(c). The Circuit Executive is directed to transmit this order to complainant and copies to the respondent judge and the Judicial Conference Committee on Judicial

Conduct and Disability. *See* Misconduct Rule 11(g)(2). To seek review of this order, complainant must file a petition for review by the Judicial Council. The requirements for filing a petition for review are set out in Misconduct Rule 18(b). The petition must be filed with the Office of the Circuit Executive within 35 days of the date of the letter transmitting this order. *Id.*

So ordered this 11th day of May, 2009.



Honorable Robert H. Henry
Chief Circuit Judge