

## JOINT STATEMENT

The parties in the lawsuit brought by Larry Bushart against Perry County, Sheriff Nick Weems, and Investigator Jason Morrow have reached a negotiated settlement. Without admitting fault or liability on the part of the defendants, Perry County's insurer has agreed to pay Mr. Bushart \$835,000 in exchange for dismissing his complaint.

Weems commented: "As Sheriff, there is no responsibility I take more seriously than protecting the children in our community, who are some of the most vulnerable among us. Ensuring their safety is not just a duty of this office, it is a commitment I carry with me every single day. I am happy to have this matter resolved, and I look forward to continuing to serve and protect the people of Perry County."

"I am pleased my First Amendment rights have been vindicated," Bushart said. "The people's freedom to participate in civil discourse is crucial to a healthy democracy. I am looking forward to moving on and spending time with my family."

Bushart is represented by the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) and Katherine Phillips of Phillips and Phillips, PLLC. The defendants are represented by Nathan D. Tilly and Haynes T. Russell of Pentecost, Glenn and Tilly, PLLC.