

As written by Justice Matthew Okocha

JUDICIAL PANEL
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

AMJAD ALMUTI

Appellate

v.

THE JUDICIAL PANEL

Respondent

MARCH 24, 2025

As written by Justice Matthew Okocha

This was an appeal hearing in which AMJAD ALMUTI appealed the Judicial Panel's ruling of a not guilty verdict for the Griffith-More slate. The appellate alleged 37 violations of Article II.A.b.vi, which says campaigns must adhere to Facilities Operations and Development Posting and Chalking Guidelines, and is submitting an appeal on the grounds of new substantial evidence.

Held: The Judicial Panel of Appeals grants the appeal and remands the case to the original panel for reconsideration in light of the newly presented evidence.

Opinion

In the matter of *Almuti v. Griffith & More*, the appellant, Mr. Amjad Almuti, submitted an appeal under Article XI, Section ii(a)(2) of the Judicial Panel Standing Rules, citing the discovery of substantial new evidence. Mr. Almuti asserts that video footage obtained after the conclusion of the original hearing identifies individuals affiliated with the Griffith-More campaign placing palm cards—campaign materials—on the windshields of cars parked in the Buckeye Lot. This act was central to the original case. At that time, while the Judicial Panel acknowledged the palm cards had been improperly placed, it ruled there was insufficient evidence to establish who was responsible, and therefore declined to find the campaign liable.

In his appeal, Mr. Almuti presents newly acquired video footage from the Ohio State University Police Department that was not available during the original hearing due to the time required for processing a public records request. The footage shows a Mercedes E-Class 350, confirmed to belong to Mr. Patrick Jotevski, entering the Buckeye Lot. Two individuals are seen exiting the vehicle and approaching cars. The appellant, through a combination of visual identification and witness confirmation, asserts that the individuals in the video are Mr. Jotevski and Mr. Jack Swartley, both members of the Griffith-More campaign. This new evidence directly addresses the original Judicial Panel's concern: a lack of clear attribution of the conduct to members of the campaign.

The Judicial Panel of Appeals finds that this evidence is material, and that it could reasonably impact the outcome of the case if it had been available at the time of the original hearing. Under the Judicial Panel Standing Rules, substantial new evidence is grounds to grant an appeal, and we find that standard to be met in full here.

There was a question raised regarding whether hearing the case again would violate the defendants' right against double jeopardy. Let us clarify this point: a substantive evidence appeal that leads to a remand is not equivalent to retrying someone after an acquittal. The new evidence was not available at the time of the original proceeding, and because of its potential to materially change the outcome, the original decision may now be reevaluated. That's not a second prosecution for the same conduct—it's a continuation of the same case, with a more complete

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evidentiary record. In procedural terms, it is almost as though the original hearing never occurred.

For these reasons, the Judicial Panel of Appeals grants the appeal and remands the case to the original panel for reconsideration in light of the newly presented evidence.

It is so ordered.

Signed: The Judicial Panel

Majority:

Chief Justice Matthew Okocha

Justice Ethan Moore

Justice Emily Doucette

Justice Judith Vega