

April 9, 1995

3125 Tecumseh River Rd.  
Lansing, MI 48906

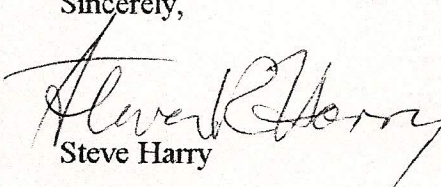
John Schneider  
Lansing State Journal  
120 E. Lenawee St.  
Lansing, MI 48919

Dear Mr. Schneider,

Sorry I am so late with this, but my computer was in the shop for repairs.

In your April 1 column, you quoted from a letter from an anonymous State employee who took you to task for not naming the State office that was conducting the football pool. He said he could not sign his letter "because contact with members of the media must first be cleared and approved by a public information person." That may be true during working hours, but after 5:00, the U.S. and Michigan constitutions protect the State employee's right to free speech just as they do other citizens'. It is important that State employees understand this, because they are often the only ones who know enough about what goes on in State government to articulate it to the public. That they have they right to publicly discuss State business outside of working hours does not mean that they will not be subject to harassment for doing so, but if that happens, they can sue. The U.S. Supreme Court determined in 1991 that State officials who violate someone's rights while performing governmental duties may be sued and forced to pay monetary damages.

Sincerely,



Steve Harry

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