

CAUSE NO. _____

LUIS LAROTTA

Plaintiff,

v.

CARLA LENA WYATT

Defendant.

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IN THE DISTRICT COURT

____ JUDICIAL DISTRICT

HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS

**PLAINTIFF’S VERIFIED ORIGINAL PETITION SEEKING STATUTORY
REMOVAL OF HARRIS COUNTY TREASURER CARLA LENA WYATT**

TO THE HONORABLE SUSAN BROWN, PRESIDING JUDGE OF THE
ELEVENTH ADMINISTRATIVE JUDICIAL REGION OF TEXAS

NOW COMES Luis LaRotta (“Plaintiff” and “Relator”), who complains of
and about Dr. Carla Lena Wyatt (“Defendant” and “Wyatt”), who currently serves
as the County Treasurer of Harris County, and brings this Verified Original Petition
Seeking Statutory Removal of the Harris County Treasurer under Chapter 87 of the
Texas Local Government Code (the “Removal Petition”). In support of this Removal
Petition, Plaintiff would show unto the Court the following:

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

1. Wyatt was elected Harris County Treasurer by the voters of Harris
County on November 8, 2022. In so doing, the electorate entrusted Wyatt with the
solemn obligation of safeguarding the public funds of the third-most-populous
county in the nation. As will be detailed below, Wyatt’s tenure has not been marked

by good governance or the protection of taxpayer dollars. To the contrary, the Harris County Treasurer has instead left a brazen and repeated trail of bizarre and potentially criminal incidents involving intoxication and incompetence.

2. Indeed, in less than four (4) years, this Defendant has compiled a track record of incompetence, the likes of which have not been seen in Harris County for quite some time, if ever. For example, Wyatt has been arrested three times in two different counties. Two of those arrests involved a criminal accusation for driving while intoxicated. A third involved a criminal charge for burglary of a motor vehicle. Public reports also suggest that her office approved two fraudulently altered checks totaling more than \$51,000, even after the county's own fraud-detection system flagged those specific payments as fraudulent. This ongoing pattern of alcohol abuse and intoxication may prove to be one of the reasons why the Harris County Treasurer continues to perform the duties of her office incompetently.

3. Rather than accept accountability for conduct that erodes public trust in the Treasurer's Office and resign, Wyatt instead doubled down on erratic behavior and asked hard-working Harris County taxpayers for a 118% raise that she did not deserve, from \$139,547 to a whopping \$305,000:

"I'm asking for an increase of my salary to 305 just like the other county-wide elected officials...Thus far I have not received a reason

as to why this was chosen for me to stay at 139 and be left out of the 305.”¹

4. Wyatt’s mounting controversies have now led the Harris County Commissioners Court to pursue elimination of her office altogether.

5. Wyatt’s conduct is not just embarrassing; it is a basis for removal under Texas law. Chapter 87 of the Texas Local Government Code provides that a county officer may be removed from office for intoxication or incompetency. This Defendant’s record satisfies both grounds. Based on her current course of conduct and potential for future harm to the office should it continue unchecked, this Court should declare that it is time to remove the Harris County Treasurer from office.

DISCOVERY-CONTROL PLAN

6. Plaintiff intends to conduct discovery under a Level 2 Discovery Control Plan.

7. Plaintiff seeks only non-monetary relief as provided under Chapter 87 of the Texas Local Government Code that is within the jurisdiction of this Court. Tex. R. Civ. P. 47(c)(5).

PARTIES

8. Plaintiff is a resident of Texas who has lived in Harris County for at least six months and is not currently under indictment in Harris County. *See* Tex.

¹ Harris County Treasurer Dr. Carla Wyatt, August 20, 2026 statement to the Harris County Commissioners Court Salary Grievance Committee.

Loc. Gov't Code § 87.015(b).²

9. Defendant currently holds the office of Harris County Treasurer. Defendant may be served at 1001 Preston St., Suite 652, Houston, Texas 77002, or wherever else she may be found.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

10. Chapter 87 of the Texas Local Government Code provides this Court with subject matter jurisdiction over this matter by virtue of the relief sought herein.

11. Section 87.015(a) of the Texas Local Government Code provides that this Removal Petition may be initiated by filing a written petition for removal of elected officers in a district court of the county in which the officer resides.

12. Section 87.015(b) of the Texas Local Government Code provides Plaintiff with standing to file this Removal Petition because he currently resides in Harris County, Texas, has resided there for at least six months, and is not currently under indictment in Harris County.

13. Section 87.012(8) of the Texas Local Government Code provides that a District Judge may remove a County Treasurer from office.

² Attached as **Exhibit A** is a true and correct copy of Plaintiff's Unsworn Declaration in support of this Verified Original Petition, incorporated by reference herein.

ASSIGNMENT OF JUDGE

14. No District Court Judge in Harris County may preside over this matter because Section 87.0151(b) of the Texas Local Government Code disqualifies all such Judges. More specifically, Section 87.0151(b) specifies that the presiding judge of the administrative judicial region shall assign a district court judge of a judicial district that does not include the county in which the Removal Petition was filed to conduct the removal proceedings.

15. Section 87.0151(a) of the Texas Local Government Code requires the Harris County District Clerk to immediately notify the Honorable Susan Brown, who is the Presiding Judge of this Judicial Region, of the filing of this Removal Petition.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

A. Wyatt is Elected Harris County Treasurer.

16. Wyatt was elected Harris County Treasurer on November 8, 2022, and assumed office on January 1, 2023. Wyatt is again on the ballot, seeking reelection to the office on November 3, 2026. Each act described below occurred after her election to office in 2022.

17. The County Treasurer is one of the county offices enumerated in Section 87.012 of the Texas Local Government Code, and its holder is therefore subject to removal under Chapter 87. As publicly reported, the Treasurer's Office has approximately twelve staff members and is responsible for independent

oversight of county funds, including the processing of county disbursements. In short, the Treasurer serves as a final checkpoint before taxpayer money leaves the county's accounts. A steady hand and prudent judgment are paramount.

B. December 22, 2023 Arrest for Driving While Intoxicated.

18. On or about December 22, 2023, in Houston, Texas, Wyatt was arrested and charged with driving while intoxicated with an alleged blood-alcohol concentration of 0.15 or more – nearly twice the legal limit of 0.08 (the “**2023 DWI Charge**”).³

19. While that charge was pending, Wyatt allegedly violated the conditions of her bond twice: first, on or about January 9, 2024, by failing to install a required ignition interlock device (a breath-testing device that prevents a vehicle from starting if the driver has been drinking),⁴ and second, on or about March 19, 2024, by being intoxicated during a blood alcohol test.⁵

20. Wyatt reportedly completed a pretrial diversion program, and the 2023 DWI Charge was dismissed on August 15, 2025. Just over four months later, she was arrested again.

³ See December 23, 2023 Charging Complaint filed in *The State of Texas vs. Carla Wyatt*, Cause Number 248960001010, Harris County Criminal Court at Law No. 4.

⁴ See Bond Condition Violation Reports dated March 5, 2024 and March 28, 2024 in Cause Number 248960001010.

⁵ *Id.*

C. December 27, 2025 Arrest for Burglary of a Motor Vehicle.

21. On or about December 27, 2025, in Houston, Texas, Wyatt was arrested and charged with burglary of a motor vehicle.⁶ According to prosecutors, Wyatt told responding officers that she had the vehicle owner’s consent to be inside the vehicle but later admitted that no such conversation had occurred.⁷

22. On or about April 1, 2026, a Harris County grand jury declined to indict Wyatt. Wyatt’s counsel stated that information about a post-arrest medical consultation was presented to the grand jury and publicly described her conduct as “unusual,” while maintaining that she had no intent to commit theft.⁸ Based on even her own counsel’s account, the episode raises serious questions about her fitness to manage public funds.

D. May 9, 2026 Arrest for Driving While Intoxicated.

23. On May 9, 2026, at approximately 1:30 a.m., in Texas City, Galveston County, Texas, a law enforcement officer found Wyatt asleep in the driver’s seat of a running vehicle stopped in the left lane of State Highway 3, according to the

⁶ See December 27, 2025 Charging Complaint filed in *The State of Texas vs. Carla Wyatt*, Cause Number 259871201010.

⁷ KPRC 2, *Attorney Says Harris County Treasurer’s Behavior Was Unusual but Had No Intention to Commit a Theft* (Jan. 2, 2026), <https://gm-g-kprc-prod.cdn.arcpublishing.com/news/local/2026/01/02/attorney-says-harris-county-treasurers-behavior-was-unusual-but-had-no-intention-to-commit-a-theft>.

⁸ *Id.*

probable cause affidavit as publicly reported.⁹ A stopped vehicle in an active travel lane in the middle of the night posed an obvious danger to other motorists.

24. Wyatt was arrested and charged with driving while intoxicated (the “**2026 DWI Charge**”), her second DWI arrest since taking office.¹⁰ That charge remains pending.¹¹

E. Approval of Fraudulently Altered Vendor Checks and Resulting Action by Commissioners Court.

25. In 2026, third parties intercepted and altered two checks issued by Harris County to county vendors, in the amounts of \$24,328 and \$27,530.¹²

26. The county uses an automated fraud-prevention system known as “Positive Pay,” which compares checks presented for payment against the checks the county actually issued and flags any mismatch for review. As reported by the Houston Chronicle, citing a county document, Positive Pay flagged both altered checks. Strangely, the Treasurer’s Office, under Wyatt’s supervision, approved the payments anyway.¹³

⁹ Houston Public Media, *Harris County Treasurer Carla Wyatt Charged With DWI in Galveston County* (May 10, 2026), <https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/local/2026/05/10/551442/harris-county-treasurer-carla-wyatt-dwi-charge-galveston/>.

¹⁰ See Complaint and Information filed in *The State of Texas vs. Carla Wyatt*, Case Number MD-0429915, Galveston County Criminal Court No. 3.

¹¹ See Magistrate Warning, Findings, and Order in Case Number MD-0429915.

¹² Houston Chronicle, *Harris County to Abolish Treasurer* (Feb. 2026), <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/politics/houston/article/harris-county-to-abolish-treasurer-21941700.php>.

¹³ *Id.*

27. In February 2026, on the recommendation of Harris County Auditor Michael Post and following discussion of the incident in executive session, the Commissioners Court voted unanimously to strip the Positive Pay function from the Treasurer’s Office and transfer that function and related staff to the Harris County Office of Management and Budget.¹⁴

28. At about the same time, the Commissioners Court voted 4-0 to add abolition of the Office of County Treasurer to the county’s legislative agenda for the January 2027 legislative session.¹⁵ Because the office is established by the Texas Constitution, its elimination requires action at the state level.

29. The Houston Chronicle editorial board has further reported that the Treasurer’s Office had not posted its monthly treasurer’s reports to its public website since early 2025, effectively depriving taxpayers of a basic tool for monitoring how their money is managed.¹⁶

F. Salary Grievance (August–September 2026).

30. In 2026, Wyatt filed a salary grievance seeking compensation of \$250,000 “or more,” against her then-current salary of \$139,547, and later raised her request to \$305,000. On August 20, 2026, the Harris County Salary Grievance

¹⁴ Houston Public Media, *Harris County Commissioners Court action regarding Treasurer Carla Wyatt and Positive Pay* (Feb. 27, 2026), <https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/harris-county/2026/02/27/544586/commissioners-court-harris-county-treasurer-carla-wyatt/>.

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ Houston Chronicle Editorial Board, *Abolish the county treasurer? Give Harris County voters a chance to throw her out*, <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/opinion/editorials/article/carla-wyatt-harris-county-treasurer-abolish-22185695.php>.

Committee voted 6–3 to recommend a salary of approximately \$181,411. On September 8, 2026, the Commissioners Court rejected the Committee’s recommendation.¹⁷

G. September 18, 2026 Four-Vehicle Collision.

31. Just ten days later, on September 18, 2026, Wyatt was involved in a four-vehicle collision on Interstate 45 in Houston, Harris County, Texas, and was cited by the Houston Police Department for failure to control speed. Public reporting described the incident as Wyatt’s fourth encounter with law enforcement since taking office.¹⁸

GROUND FOR REMOVAL

32. Based on the foregoing facts, and as set forth more fully below, Plaintiff alleges two grounds for Wyatt’s removal under Section 87.013(a) of the Texas Local Government Code: (1) intoxication on or off duty caused by drinking an alcoholic beverage, under Section 87.013(a)(3); and (2) incompetency, as defined in Section 87.011(2).

¹⁷ KPRC 2 Click2Houston, *Harris County Treasurer Could Get 30% Raise as County Weighs Eliminating Her Office* (Aug. 20, 2026), <https://www.click2houston.com/news/local/2026/08/20/harris-county-treasurer-could-get-30-raise-as-county-weighs-eliminating-her-office/>.

¹⁸ KPRC 2 Click2Houston, *Harris County Treasurer Cited After 4-Vehicle North Freeway Crash* (Sept. 24, 2026), <https://www.click2houston.com/news/local/2026/09/24/harris-county-treasurer-cited-after-4vehicle-north-freeway-crash/>.

I. INTOXICATION - § 87.013(a)(3).

33. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.

34. Pursuant to Section 87.013(a)(3) of the Texas Local Government Code, an officer may be removed for intoxication on or off duty caused by drinking an alcoholic beverage. Intoxication must be caused by the voluntary consumption of alcohol. It can occur at any time, whether or not the officer is performing official duties, and does not require a violation of the law to be a basis for removal under Section 87.013(a)(3). There is no requirement to establish a pattern of habitual drunkenness.

35. The above-mentioned conduct by Wyatt far exceeds this standard and establishes a pattern of intoxication that is deleterious to her ability to carry out the responsibilities of her office.

36. Importantly, Wyatt's brushes with law enforcement show just the tip of the iceberg; if she has already been arrested twice for driving while intoxicated, how many times has she not been caught? How many times has she been intoxicated but not actually driving? How many times has she been intoxicated in a public place? The Texas Legislature included the intoxication basis for this very scenario. Justice and public accountability demand removal.

II. INCOMPETENCY - § 87.013(a)(1).

37. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.

38. Pursuant to Section 87.013(a)(1) of the Texas Local Government Code, an officer may be removed for incompetency. Under Section 87.011(2), incompetency means: (A) gross ignorance of official duties; (B) gross carelessness in the discharge of those duties; or (C) unfitness or inability to promptly and properly discharge official duties because of a serious physical or mental defect that did not exist at the time of the officer's election.

39. The above-referenced conduct by Defendant Wyatt indicates one or both of the following: (i) gross ignorance of her official duties; and/or (ii) gross carelessness in the discharge of those duties.

SUSPENSION PENDING TRIAL - TEMPORARY APPOINTEE

40. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.

41. Plaintiff requests that this Court immediately hold a hearing to temporarily suspend Defendant Wyatt from her duties as Harris County Treasurer and appoint another person to perform the duties of the office.

42. Section 87.017 of the Texas Local Government Code allows for suspension of an officer pending trial.

JURY DEMAND

43. Pursuant to Section 87.018 of the Texas Local Government Code, a jury trial is hereby demanded.

PRAYER

WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, Plaintiff prays that the Court grant to him all of the relief requested as outlined above, and all such other and further relief to which Plaintiff may be justly entitled.

Respectfully submitted,

ANDY TAYLOR & ASSOCIATES, P.C.

BY: /s/ Andy Taylor

Andy Taylor

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713-412-4025

ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF

CAUSE NO. _____

LUIS LAROTTA

Plaintiff,

v.

CARLA LENA WYATT

Defendant.

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IN THE DISTRICT COURT

____ JUDICIAL DISTRICT

HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS

UNSWORN DECLARATION OF LUIS LAROTTA

Pursuant to §132.001 of the Texas Civil Practice & Remedies Code, this unsworn declaration is used in lieu of a written verification otherwise required under Rule 93 of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure:

My name is Luis LaRotta. My date of birth is October 4, 1980. My address is PO Box 70814, Houston, Texas 77270. I am over the age of eighteen, of sound mind, capable of making this unsworn declaration, and have personal knowledge of the facts herein stated.

As required by Chapter 87 of the Texas Local Government, I have been a resident of Harris County, Texas for more than six (6) months preceding the filing of this lawsuit and I am not currently under indictment in Harris County, Texas.

I declare under penalty of perjury that I have read Plaintiff's Verified Original Petition and the supporting cited articles (the "*Petition*") and that the allegations contained in the Factual Background section of the Petition describing the course of conduct of Defendant are true and correct recitations of the information contained in the cited articles:

Executed this 15th day of October, 2026.

/s/ 
Luis LaRotta