



Brothers and Sisters,

The California State Grange agreed yesterday to stay most of the remaining proceedings in the state court lawsuit pending the resolution of the McFarland Group's appeal of the order compelling it to return Grange property to the California State Grange. A [copy of the parties' agreement is available here](#), and was entered by the Court this morning. In particular, we agreed to stay our claims against Mr. McFarland and the other individual defendants, so the trial set to start on January 26 has been postponed until after the appeal is completed. Needless to say, this agreement means that countless thousands of Grange dollars (including Grange dollars that the McFarland Group is using to pay its lawyers) will be saved so that they can be used for our important work in our communities throughout California, rather than spent on further litigation. While our claims that Mr. McFarland and the others should be personally liable for the huge amounts of Grange money lost because of their defiance of Grange rules may still need to be tried following the appeal, it is my hope that the Grange property held by the McFarland Group will be returned in such a way that there is no need to seek these damages. And it is my sincere hope that the path forward for all Granges and the restoration of our State Grange will be smoother without the hard feelings that can be engendered by active litigation.

However, given the Court's emphatic statement that the McFarland Group is not a Grange, has no right to hold any Grange property, and must return Grange property to the California State Grange, the stay does not apply to the California State Grange's and the National Grange's efforts to identify the property held by the McFarland Group and to enforce the Court's order. Those efforts will continue unabated. The Court has spoken on these issues, and the McFarland Group's appeal will fail. The California State Grange will do everything it can to ensure that the Grange property is protected until it is returned to the Order.

I believe that this stay is an important step in the healing process of our Grange. As I have said, reconciliation means returning to good standing. All Granges, Grangers, and Patrons in California are members of the California State Grange, even those that are not in good standing. I hope that that every Grange that is not in good standing will take the steps necessary to comply with its obligations as a Grange and return to good standing. The California State Grange has a reinstatement program available for any Grange that is behind on its dues because it has paid past dues to the McFarland Group. And, as always, you can call or e-mail me any time to discuss any issue.

Fraternally yours,

Ed Kowski, Master /President
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