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Joseph Greenwald & Laake principal Brian Markovitz was interviewed for a Sept. 24 article in the Washington Blade regarding a lawsuit against the Washington Teachers Union, filed Sept. 18 in federal court. Brian Markovitz is representing Barry Hobson, a gay former employee of the WTU, who accused the union, its president and its former chief of staff of subjecting him to a toxic work environment, and firing him for his sexual orientation.

In the lawsuit, Hobson says that former chief of staff Dorothy Egbufor subjected him to discriminatory treatment and harassment due to his being gay immediately after informing her that his healthcare benefits would also benefit his then-fiancé, and current husband, Timothy Savoy. The lawsuit includes copies of two internal emails that the lawsuit claims make disparaging remarks about both Hobson and the general LGBT community.

The first email shows Egbufor purportedly denying that Hobson should receive access to the company's health insurance plan, due to his sexual orientation. In the email, Egbufor claimed that LGBT employees who participate in employer health insurance programs would increase insurance premiums. However, Markovitz called the denial of health insurance a "clear violation of the D.C. Human Rights Act, which bans discrimination based on sexual orientation."

In addition, WTU General Vice President Jaqueline Pogue-Lyons wrote Hobson a letter of recommendation for a new job, which Markovitz described as a "strong rebuke to Davis and Egbufor and a major boost to Hobson's lawsuit."

Brian Markovitz is a principal in JGL's Labor and Employment and Civil Litigation practice groups and focuses on helping victims who have suffered severe injustices in the workplace. He represents individuals in complex employment litigation and appellate matters involving wrongful termination, retaliation by employers in response to reporting fraud or misconduct and discrimination on the basis on race, gender, age and sexual orientation.

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