

PHILLY'S ETHICALLY CHALLENGED D.A.

Bill Donohue comments on the latest scandal in Pennsylvania law enforcement:

Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams, like now-disgraced Pennsylvania Attorney General Kathleen Kane, has tried to make a name for himself through a campaign of Catholic-bashing. As we noted earlier this month, Williams continues his vendetta against Msgr. William Lynn, whose bogus conviction over his handling of sexual abuse allegations has just been tossed out for the third time (click [here](#)).

Now it turns out that the moralizing Philly D.A. is—like the just-convicted Kane (click [here](#))—quite ethically challenged himself.

Over the past six years, Williams, by his own belated admission, has accumulated more than \$160,000 in unreported gifts from friends, defense attorneys, business owners, campaign donors, a judge (who as a defense attorney had routinely negotiated plea deals with Williams' office), and others. The swag included free vacations, like four family getaways at the Florida beach house of an attorney who has represented many defendants charged by Williams' office; air fare for vacation trips; thousands of dollars in tickets to sporting events; Visa gift cards; furniture; clothing; an iPad; free home repairs from a builder, including a new roof worth \$45,000—and cash gifts.

Philadelphia's ethics law requires public officials to report all gifts they receive worth more than \$200. Indeed, Williams had previously convicted five public officials for accepting unreported gifts from an undercover informant. Their total take? About \$9,000. Williams accepted gifts worth almost 18

times that amount—and evidently saw no need to report them, until it became known that the FBI and IRS are investigating his finances. His delay allowed him to hide these gifts from voters when he ran for re-election in 2013.

Williams, like Kane, apparently figured he was above the law. She just found out differently. It's time he did as well.