

# Former mayor says 'stop being so polite' over LDS Church, legislature ties

 [kutv.com/news/local/former-mayor-says-stop-being-so-polite-over-lds-church-legislature-ties](https://www.kutv.com/news/local/former-mayor-says-stop-being-so-polite-over-lds-church-legislature-ties)

by Brian Mullahy



FILE- In this Jan. 3, 2018, file photo, the angel Moroni statue, silhouetted against the sky, sits atop the Salt Lake Temple, at Temple Square in Salt Lake City. After months of fierce debate and campaigning, Mormon church leaders, state lawmakers and the governor all opponents of the initiative reached a compromise with medical marijuana advocates in which they agreed on parameters for a law that suited all sides. (AP Photo/Rick Bowmer, File)

(KUTV) — A day after sending an email to leaders of the Utah legislature and two Latter-day Saint Church officials asking them to preserve documents related to Proposition 2 — the medical marijuana initiative — lawyer and former Salt Lake Mayor Rocky Anderson said “we have to stop being so polite” about church-lawmaker ties.

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints tells people how they’re going to vote,” said Anderson, adding it’s no secret.

On behalf of clients Christine Stenquist, a patient and Prop 2 leader, and Doug Rice, president of the Utah Epilepsy Association, Anderson’s email said they are “investigating any effort, in collusion with or at the behest of” the LDS Church and lawmakers over a medical marijuana “compromise.”

That proposal was announced days before the election, and was worked out between House

Speaker Greg Hughes, LDS chief lobbyist Marty Stephens — a former Speaker of the House — and two supporters of Prop 2. The agreement, it was stated, would be taken up by the legislature in a special session, which Governor Gary Herbert agreed to call.

Anderson’s email said “relevant evidence is not to be destroyed.”

The Church responded with a statement on Thursday.

“As members of the community, we have worked, from the outset, with medical professionals, law enforcement, educators and many other groups and prominent community leaders to seek the best for the people of Utah, to provide relief from human pain and suffering, especially where children are concerned,” said LDS spokesman Doug Andersen. “Broad community engagement was the reason a workable, beneficial and safer medical cannabis program was put together at the direction of state leadership. We stand behind and look forward to the safe, responsible and compassionate solution that will be considered by the state legislature.”

Hughes’ reaction had a different tone.

“I think Rocky’s gracious to include me in his latest Kabuki theater act,” he said. “As I am retiring from the House, I’ll miss serious public service but at least I’ll have time to play along.”

Rocky Anderson has threatened a lawsuit — though it’s unknown against whom, and what would be alleged.

“I think it’s a potential (lawsuit) right now,” said Stenquist. “I’d like to see us get to discovery to be able to establish a pattern of behavior between the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the legislative body.”

Doug Rice, who said a cannabis product has dramatically helped his daughter’s daily seizures, told 2News he would be satisfied if lawmakers largely leave intact Prop 2, as it was passed by voters.



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