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Ex-county pension official sues Aguirre

A former investment officer for the San Diego County pension fund who claimed he was fired after raising concerns over the risk the fund was taking, then lost legal battles to get his job back, is now suing his lawyer, former San Diego City Attorney Michael Aguirre.

In a suit filed April 13 in San Diego Superior Court, former investment officer Jeffrey Baker blames Aguirre for the loss of his job. Baker was fired by the San Diego County Employees Retirement Association in July 2011 after he had voiced concerns that the system was breaking its own rules regarding risky investments.

“The reality is he was employed and ultimately terminated for doing something at the direction of his lawyer,” said [Josh Gruenberg](#), the lawyer who filed the suit against Aguirre.

The county pension system said Baker was fired for breaking its rules when he provided emails and other documents to a reporter for U-T San Diego. Baker appealed the firing to the county Civil Service Commission, which upheld it in 2012.

He also filed a federal whistle-blower lawsuit that was dismissed by a judge in March.

The new lawsuit says Aguirre used the case for his own publicity. It also says Baker provided the documents to the U-T because Aguirre told him to, and it was OK to do so. He was put on paid leave two days after the U-T published the story in May 2011 and was fired in July.

The suit also said Aguirre did a poor job representing him in the subsequent hearings in front of the county Civil Service Commission.

Aguirre said on Wednesday that he was disappointed Baker, who he said acted “bravely” for voicing concerns about the fund, had sued him. He said that when Baker first came to see him in early 2011, he had already been targeted for retaliation by pension officials unhappy with his complaints, and that the emails were not the real reason why he lost his job.

Original Article: <http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/sdut-county-pension-official-aguirre-lawsuit-2013apr18-story.html>