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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

ROGER W. KNIGHT,

Plaintiff,

v.

RONAL W. SERPAS, et al.,

Defendants.

CASE NO. C02-1641C

ORDER OF DISMISSAL

This matter comes before the Court on plaintiff's complaint for enforcement of civil rights and for enforcement of the Anti-Peonage Act (Dkt. No. 1), the Court's order to show cause why the Court should not dismiss plaintiff's action pursuant to the Younger abstention doctrine (Dkt. No. 5), plaintiff's response to the Court's order to show cause (Dkt. No. 9), and the answer to plaintiff's complaint by defendants Ronal Serpas, Jeffrey Mitchell, Fred Stephens, Dennis Braddock, and Gary Locke ("the state defendants") (Dkt. No. 12). In addition, the Court has carefully reviewed United States District Judge Robert S. Lasnik's September 25, 2002 order regarding motions for summary judgment in case number C02-0879L, Roger W. Knight v. City of Mercer Island, et al. (Dkt. No. 65). For the following reasons, plaintiff's complaint is hereby DISMISSED with prejudice.

Plaintiff's unpaid child-support obligations currently exceed \$50,000. As a result, in September

ORDER OF DISMISSAL - 1

CXc, JCC, JM

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1 2001, the Washington State Department of Licensing ("DOL") suspended his driver's license pursuant
2 to the WorkFirst Act, which was codified in 1997. On August 4, 2002, defendant Mitchell pulled over
3 plaintiff for a routine traffic stop along Interstate 90. When defendant Mitchell learned that plaintiff was
4 driving with a suspended license, he contacted a towing company as required. The towing company
5 impounded plaintiff's vehicle. This chain of events was no surprise to plaintiff. The City of Mercer
6 Island cited plaintiff for the same infraction in both January 2002 and February 2002.

7 In this action, plaintiff asserts claims against all parties bearing any relationship to the August 4,
8 2002 traffic stop. This list includes DOL and the Washington State Department of Social and Health
9 Services ("DSHS), whose administrative procedures led to plaintiff's license suspension, members of the
10 Washington State Patrol involved in the traffic stop, and the private towing company called to impound
11 plaintiff's vehicle. Plaintiff's complaint seeks a declaration that the WorkFirst Act is unconstitutional –
12 both facially and as applied to plaintiff – and violates the Anti-Peonage Act. Plaintiff also seeks to
13 enjoin all defendants from enforcing the WorkFirst Act. He also seeks monetary damages related to
14 defendants' impounding of his vehicle. This action mirrors case number C02-0879L, Roger W. Knight
15 v. City of Mercer Island, et al. In that action, plaintiff sued DOL, DSHS, the City of Mercer Island, its
16 law enforcement officers, and a private towing company. Plaintiff's claims stemmed from his January
17 2002 and February 2002 traffic stops. He sought relief almost identical to that sought here.

18 On September 25, 2002, the Honorable Robert S. Lasnik granted the motions for summary
19 judgment by defendants in case number C02-879L on numerous grounds, including the Younger
20 abstention and Rooker-Feldman doctrines, the doctrine of res judicata, and plaintiff's failure to state a
21 claim pursuant to the Anti-Peonage Act. Moreover, after addressing plaintiff's extensive history of
22 repetitive and frivolous filings challenging his child support obligations and the WorkFirst Act, Judge
23 Lasnik entered an order barring plaintiff from filing any action involving, referring to, or calling into
24 question "the validity of plaintiff's child support order, the WorkFirst Act, or the state's efforts to collect
25 child support payments from plaintiff through contempt proceedings or license suspensions."

26 ORDER OF DISMISSAL – 2

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1 Judge Lasnik's litigation bar does not govern plaintiff's claims here because plaintiff filed this
2 action prior to that order. However, it is important to note that plaintiff asserts the same claims in this
3 action as in case number C02-0879L, merely substituting the parties involved in the August 2002 traffic
4 stop for those involved in the January 2002 and February 2002 traffic stops. The Court finds Judge
5 Lasnik's thorough discussion of the Younger abstention and Rooker-Feldman doctrines highly
6 persuasive. In addition, this Court concurs with Judge Lasnik's rejection of plaintiff's multiple
7 constitutional challenges to the WorkFirst Act. Plaintiff raises the same arguments here. The Court also
8 finds that plaintiff has had ample prior opportunities to litigate his challenges to the WorkFirst Act.
9 Thus, the doctrine of res judicata bars those challenges here, regardless of the fact that certain defendant
10 parties differ. Finally, because plaintiff's constitutional and Anti-Peonage Act challenges to the
11 WorkFirst Act fail, there is no legal basis for plaintiff's claims against members of the Washington State
12 Patrol or a private towing company. Those parties were simply acting and operating in good faith; the
13 Court concludes that plaintiff's claims against those parties are frivolous.

14 Therefore, the Court DISMISSES with prejudice plaintiff's complaint pursuant to the Younger
15 abstention and Rooker-Feldman doctrines, the doctrine of res judicata, plaintiff's failure to state a claim
16 pursuant to the Anti-Peonage Act, and for frivolity.¹ The clerk is directed to enter judgment accordingly.

17 SO ORDERED this 14 day of November, 2002.

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20 CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE
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25 ¹ The Court notes that the state defendants raised a number of these defenses in answer.