

State News

HOUSE

McKinney state Rep. Frazier pleads no contest to charges he impersonated a public servant

PATRICK SVITEK AND AYDEN RUNNELS
The Texas Tribune

MCKINNEY — State Rep. Frederick Frazier, R-McKinney, on Tuesday pleaded no contest to two misdemeanor charges of trying to impersonate a public servant, part of a plea agreement stemming from allegations he targeted his primary runoff opponent’s campaign signs over a year ago.

Frazier, a Dallas police officer who first ran for the House last year with the backing of former President Donald Trump, has also pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of criminal mischief.

In pleading no contest to the first two charges, Frazier accepted a year of probation and a maximum \$4,000 fine for each offense.

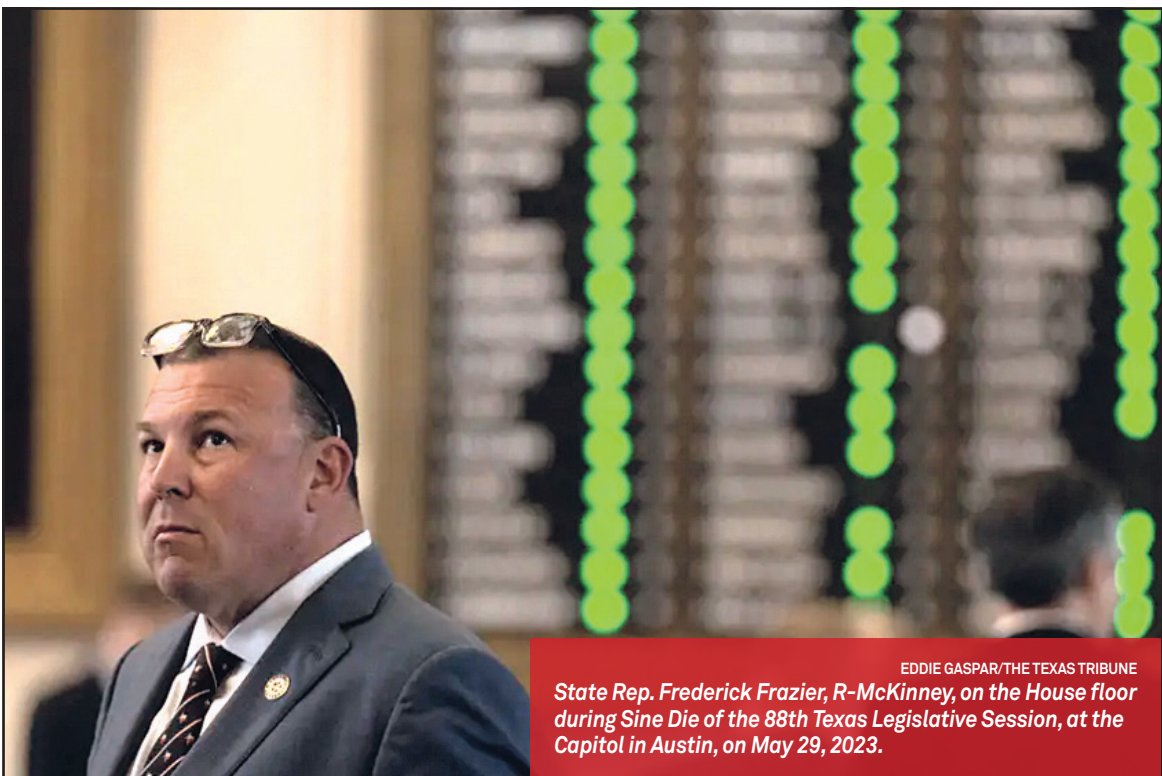
Frazier separately pleaded guilty to the criminal mischief charge in McKinney municipal court, according to his lawyer, Robert Rogers. Rogers said Frazier paid a fine of less than \$500 for that offense.

Frazier is expected to leave the Dallas Police Department, where he has been on administrative leave amid an internal investigation. A department spokesperson, Kristin Lowman, said Tuesday morning Frazier “has submitted his intent to retire under investigation.”

Frazier will be dishonorably discharged, according to a voicemail that assistant Chief Monique Alex left his former opponent, Paul Chabot, on Tuesday. Chabot provided the Tribune audio of the voicemail.

Lowman, the department spokesperson, declined to confirm Frazier will be dishonorably discharged.

Frazier appeared Tuesday morning in a Collin County courtroom to enter the no-contest pleas. In a statement afterward, Frazier called the case a “very long and ridiculous



EDDIE GASPAR/THE TEXAS TRIBUNE
State Rep. Frederick Frazier, R-McKinney, on the House floor during Sine Die of the 88th Texas Legislative Session, at the Capitol in Austin, on May 29, 2023.

process.”

“I am very happy to have this 2-year-old issue behind me,” Frazier said. “At the end of the process, my record will remain clear. I remain committed to serving the people of Collin County.”

By pleading guilty to the misdemeanor charge — instead of the felonies he was initially charged with — Frazier can continue serving in the House. Felons cannot serve in elected office in Texas in most cases.

Frazier is running for a second term and faces two primary challengers backed by Attorney General Ken Paxton, who is working to unseat House Republicans who voted to impeach him in May.

Chabot said he was vindicated by the plea deal.

“It’s been nearly two years since

Mr. Frazier was first investigated for multiple crimes targeting my campaign,” Chabot said in a statement. “Eventually, the truth came out – but not before he did incredible damage to himself, the office of a public figure, and that of a law enforcement officer using hundreds of thousands of dollars in mailers to lead voters to believe I was making up the criminal offenses.”

Chabot called the plea agreement a “George Santos moment for Texas,” referring to the former New York congressman who was indicted on allegations that he stole money from campaign donors. Chabot said the Texas House should expel Frazier, like the U.S. House booted Santos last week.

Frazier was indicted in June 2022 on two charges of impersonating a

public servant, which is a third-degree felony. The indictment accused Frazier of impersonating a McKinney city code enforcement employee on two occasions to instruct people to “remove campaign signage.” Chabot said his signs were the ones targeted.

At the time, Frazier’s campaign called Chabot a liar. He was indicted weeks after winning his runoff election in May.

Despite his legal woes, Frazier won the general election in November and was sworn in to the House in January of this year.

The case was repeatedly delayed this year as lawmakers went through a regular session and four special sessions. Frazier claimed multiple legislative continuances, which allow lawmakers to postpone cases they are involved in until 30 days after the Leg-

islature is done meeting.

Prior to the plea deal, the case was scheduled to finally go to trial on Dec. 11.

Frazier represents House District 61, a Republican-friendly seat in northern Collin County outside Dallas. He has long made clear he is seeking reelection despite the criminal case, announcing his bid for a second term months ago.

He is among the dozens of House Republicans that Paxton is working to defeat after the House impeached him on abuse-of-office allegations in May. The Senate acquitted him in September. Frazier has two primary challengers, Chuck Branch and Keresa Richardson, who have received Paxton’s backing.

Gov. Greg Abbott recently backed Frazier for reelection as part of a blanket endorsement of dozens of House Republicans who sided with Abbott in favor of school vouchers.

Both of Frazier’s primary challengers responded to the news of the plea deal by calling for his resignation.

“We do not need criminals in public office,” Richardson said. “If Frazier was willing to lie to get into office, he cannot be trusted to tell the truth while in office. If Frazier was willing to destroy others’ property to get into office, he cannot be trusted to protect our public property while in office. And if Frazier was willing to break the law to get into office, he cannot be trusted to uphold the law while in office.”

This article originally appeared in The Texas Tribune at <https://www.texastribune.org/2023/12/05/fredrick-frazier-plea-deal-impersonating-public-servant-texas/>.

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