



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chair Richard C. Miadich’s statement on Campaign Donations and Commissioners

Full Statement given to the Los Angeles Times from Chair Miadich

“I believe that as leaders of the State’s ethics and campaign finance watchdog agency, FPPC Commissioners should conduct themselves in a way that exceeds the bare minimum of the law and demonstrates exemplary standards of transparency and ethics. By so doing we enhance public trust and confidence in our government and electoral process. That is why I believe Commissioners should refrain from contributing to local, state, AND federal candidates - even if the latter is not strictly required by the law - while serving on the Commission in order to avoid any potential perception of favoritism or bias in our decision making. As Chair, I have refrained and will to continue to refrain from making contributions to any candidates during my tenure.

In September 2019, I asked the Commissioners to review our rules of internal conduct, including our statement of incompatible activities, to ensure we are adhering to best practices and the highest ethical standards.

At the September meeting, a Commissioner questioned whether the statement in our internal policies and procedures manual prohibiting Commissioners from contributing to federal candidates was lawful. After discussion, it appeared that it was an unsettled legal question of whether the California Political Reform Act required such a prohibition, and whether such a prohibition could be imposed as a matter of Commission policy without violating Commissioner’s First Amendment rights. In order to balance the goal of ensuring best practices with the legal obligation not to unduly violate constitutional rights, the Commission voted to ask the Attorney General for advice on the issue and temporarily hold the policy in abeyance pending receipt of that advice.

To be clear, I support maintaining a prohibition on Commissioners contributing to federal candidates and look forward to receiving legal advice that such a rule may be imposed without violating important First Amendment rights.”

Richard C. Miadich, Chair, FPPC

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