FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
428 J Street • Suite 620 • Sacramento, CA 95814-2329
(916) 322-5660 • Fax (916) 322-0886

October 28, 2011

Ms. Carol Steed

REDACTED

Re: Warning Letter
FPPC No. 11/170; Carol Steed

Dear Ms. Steed:

The Fair Political Practices Commission ("FPPC") enforces the provisions of the Political Reform Act ("Act"),[1] found in Government Code section 81000, and following. This letter is in response to a non-filer referral from FPPC's Technical Assistance Division that alleged you violated the Act's disclosure provisions regarding your failure to file your Statement(s) of Economic Interests ("SEI").

The FPPC has completed its investigation of the facts in this case. Specifically, the FPPC found that you violated the Act's disclosure provisions when, as a former Commissioner of the Avocado Commission, you failed to properly file your 2008 Annual SEI.

Section 87300 of the Act requires every state and local agency to develop a Conflict-of-Interest Code. This code must require persons involved in the making, or participating in the making, of decisions which may foreseeably have a material financial effect on any financial interest belonging to that person to disclose reportable interests. Each newly designated employee shall file a statement within 30 days after assuming office. Throughout the duration of holding that office, each designated employee shall file an annual statement at the time specified in the code. Lastly, every designated employee who leaves office shall file a statement within 30 days of leaving their position.

[1] The Political Reform Act is contained is Government Code sections 81000 through 91014. All statutory references are to the Government Code, unless otherwise indicated. The regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission are contained in sections 18110 through 18997 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations. All regulatory references are to Title 2, Division 6 of the California Code of Regulations, unless otherwise indicated.

Your actions violated the Act because you failed to file the required statement by the respective deadline. (Gov. Code § 87300.) However, since you have left office, and you do not have a history of violating the Act, we are closing this matter with a warning letter. The information in this matter will be retained and may be considered should an enforcement action become necessary based on future conduct or newly discovered information. Failure to comply with the provisions of the Act in the future will result in monetary penalties of up to $5,000 for each violation.

Although the Enforcement Division is not seeking a penalty in the current matter, you are still required to file the 2008 Annual SEI and will be responsible for any late filing fees assessed by your filing officer. (Gov. Code § 91013.)

A warning letter is an FPPC case resolution without administrative prosecution or fine. However, the warning letter resolution does not provide you with the opportunity for a probable cause hearing or hearing before an Administrative Law Judge or the Fair Political Practices Commission. If you wish to avail yourself of these proceedings by requesting that your case proceed with prosecution rather than a warning, please notify us within ten (10) days from the date of this letter. Upon this notification, the FPPC will rescind this warning letter and proceed with administrative prosecution of this case. If we do not receive such notification, this warning letter will be posted on the FPPC's website ten (10) days from the date of this letter.

The FPPC publishes forms and manuals to facilitate compliance with the provisions of the Act. If you need forms or a manual, or guidance regarding your obligations, please call the FPPC's Technical Assistance Division at 1-866-275-3772. Please also visit our website at www.fppc.ca.gov.

Please feel free to contact Terri Rindahl at (916) 327-2018 with any questions you may have regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

REDACTED

Gary S. Winuk
Chief, Enforcement Division

GSW/tr

cc: Trish Mayer, FPPC's Technical Assistance Division