



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
1102 Q Street • Suite 3000 • Sacramento, CA 95811

May 18, 2023

Cheryl Dillingham for Humboldt County Assessor-Controller 2022

Cheryl Dillingham, Candidate and Current Treasurer

Kyle Knopp, Former Treasurer

Via email: cheryld4auditor@gmail.com

Warning Letter Re: FPPC No. 2023-00117; Cheryl Dillingham for Humboldt County Assessor-Controller 2022, Dillingham, Knopp

Dear Committee, Cheryl Dillingham, and Kyle Knopp,

The Enforcement Division of the Fair Political Practices Commission enforces the provisions of the Political Reform Act (the “Act”).¹ As you are aware, in response to the Enforcement Division’s pre-election outreach program, we were informed by Humboldt County that you failed to timely file a pre-election campaign statement in connection with the June 7, 2022 Primary Election. The Enforcement Division has completed its review of the facts in this case. Specifically, we found that you failed to timely file the second pre-election campaign statement. Additionally, we found that you failed to timely file three 24-Hour Contribution Reports (Form 497).

The Act requires candidate-controlled committees to file two pre-election campaign statements at specified times prior to the election in which the candidate will be on the ballot, as well as semi-annual campaign statements each year no later than July 31 for the period ending June 30, and no later than January 31 for the period ending December 31.² The obligation to file semi-annual campaign statements continues until the candidate or treasurer terminates the committee. The Act also requires candidate-controlled committees that receive a contribution(s), including a loan, totaling \$1,000 or more from a single source within 90 days before the election, or on the date of the election, to file a 24-Hour Contribution Report within 24 hours of receiving the contribution.³ Controlling candidates and committee treasurers are jointly and severally liable for violations by the committee.⁴

¹ The Political Reform Act is contained in Government Code sections 81000 through 91014, and all statutory references are to this code. The regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission are contained in Sections 18110 through 18997 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, and all regulatory references are to this source.

² Sections 84200.5 and 84200.

³ Sections 82036 and 84203.

⁴ Sections 83116.5 and 91006.

Your actions violated the Act because you failed to timely file the second pre-election campaign statement for the period covering April 24, 2022 through May 21, 2022, by the May 26, 2022 deadline. You also violated the Act by failing to timely file three 24-Hour Contribution Reports within 24 hours of receiving contributions totaling \$1,000 or more on March 26, 2022, April 19, 2022, and April 21, 2022. However, for the following reasons, we are closing this matter with a warning letter rather than a fine: You were referred as part of the proactive pre-election outreach program; you filed the second pre-election campaign statement after you were contacted by the Enforcement Division and before the applicable election; you timely filed the first pre-election campaign statement; the contributions that triggered 24-Hour Contribution Reports were disclosed on the timely filed first pre-election statement; and, you have no history of violating the Act.

Please note that while the Enforcement Division is closing this matter without a fine, your filing officer, Humboldt County, may assess late filing penalties. This letter serves as a written warning. The information in this matter will be retained and may be considered should an enforcement action become necessary based on newly discovered information or future conduct. 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.

A warning letter is an Enforcement Division case resolution without administrative prosecution or fine. The Commission has adopted Regulation 18360.1 to authorize the Enforcement Division to issue warning letters to conclude cases in specified circumstances. 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 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 Enforcement Division 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 Commission's website ten (10) days from the date of this letter.

Please feel free to contact Tara Stock at tstock@fppc.ca.gov or 916-322-8241 with any questions you may have regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

Christopher B. Burton

Christopher B. Burton, Acting Chief
Enforcement Division

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