



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
1102 Q Street • Suite 3050 • Sacramento, CA 95811

January 23, 2024

Steven Hille
Alicia C. Hille
Steven A. Hille for Paradise Town Council 2018



Warning Letter Re: FPPC No. 2018-01236; Steven A. Hille for Paradise Town Council 2018, Steven Hille, and Alicia C. Hille

Dear Steven Hille and Committee:

The Enforcement Division of the Fair Political Practices Commission enforces the provisions of the Political Reform Act (the “Act”).¹ As you are aware, the Enforcement Division received a sworn complaint alleging you violated the Act by accepting two prohibited cash contributions. The Enforcement Division has completed its investigation and found that the Committee received a prohibited \$1,700 cash contribution and failed to report a contribution on a semi-annual campaign statement. After a review of the Committee’s bank statements, there’s insufficient evidence to prove the Committee received a prohibited \$200 cash contribution, so the Enforcement Division will take no further action as to that allegation.

The Act requires each campaign statement to contain the total amount of contributions received and expenditures made during the period covered by the campaign statement.² The Act also requires that no contribution of one hundred dollars (\$100) or more be made or received in cash.³

The Committee violated the Act by failing to report a \$1,000 contribution on a semi-annual campaign statement for the reporting period of October 21, 2018 through December 31, 2018, and by receiving a prohibited cash contribution of \$1,700 on September 11, 2018.⁴ However, mitigating circumstances exist here. Although the Committee failed to report a \$1,000 contribution on a semi-annual campaign statement, it was reported on a 24-hour contribution report prior to the election. Additionally, you were an unsuccessful candidate; you timely filed campaign statements; you have since terminated the Committee; and finally, you have no prior

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 18104 through 18998 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, and all regulatory references are to this source.

² Section 84211, subd. (a).

³ Section 84300, subd. (a).

⁴ This violation is past the 5-year statute of limitations and, therefore, is not subject to this warning letter.

history violating the Act. Furthermore, the Committee's records were destroyed by the Camp Fire on November 8, 2018. Based on the foregoing, and in accordance with the Enforcement Division Policy Directives formally adopted by the Commission on January 26, 2023, which requires the Enforcement Division to take all appropriate actions within their discretion to decrease the Division's annual carryover caseload, the Enforcement Division is closing this case with this warning letter.⁵ Discretion was used based upon mitigating or aggravating circumstances and the totality of the circumstances.⁶ Additionally, discretion was used for violations that caused minimal public harm when lack of experience or knowledge of the Act's requirements caused multiple violations with minimal public harm that were corrected after contact.⁷ This resolution may not be used as a comparable case for other enforcement matters.⁸

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 Angela Brereton at 916-322-5771 or abrereton@fppc.ca.gov with any questions you may have regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

Angela J. Brereton

Angela J. Brereton
Assistant Chief
Enforcement Division

⁵ <https://www.fppc.ca.gov/content/dam/fppc/NS-Documents/AgendaDocuments/General%20Items/2023/january/15.0-Enforcement-directives.pdf>

⁶ Regulation 18360.1.

⁷ Regulation 18360.2.

⁸ See Regulation 18361.5, subdivision (e)(3).