

News from the FPPC



California Fair Political Practices Commission
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Additional information on each of the enforcement cases listed below can be found in the August agenda on the FPPC website at www.fppc.ca.gov. FPPC agendas are distributed and posted on the agency website at least 10 days prior to each monthly meeting.

The web version of the agenda includes links to the stipulations agreed to between the FPPC Enforcement Division and the individuals and organizations subject to the fines, or the default decisions proposed to the Commission. Exhibits in support of the stipulations and proposed default decisions are also available on the website. If you need further assistance, please contact the FPPC communications office at (916) 322-7761 or press@fppc.ca.gov.

I. The following are enforcement decisions approved by the Fair Political Practices Commission at its regular monthly meeting held on Thursday, August 15, 2024. Decisions are listed by category and include a brief summary of each case and the total amount of any administrative fine in each case.

Misuse of Campaign Funds

In the Matter of Hallinan for Board of Equalization 2018, Hallinan for Supervisor 2020, Tom Hallinan and Hannah Burcaw; FPPC No. 20/861. Staff: Bridgette Castillo, Senior Commission Counsel and Lance Hachigian, Special Investigator. This matter arose from an audit performed by the Audit Division of the Fair Political Practices Commission. Tom Hallinan was an unsuccessful candidate for Board of Equalization in the November 6, 2018 General Election. Hallinan for Board of Equalization 2018 (“2018 Committee”) was Hallinan’s candidate-controlled committee. Additionally, Hallinan was an unsuccessful candidate for Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors in the November 3, 2020 General Election. Hallinan for Supervisor 2020 (“2020 Committee”) was Hallinan’s candidate-controlled committee. Hannah Burcaw served as the Committee’s treasurer for both the 2018 Committee and the 2020 Committee. The 2018 Committee, Hallinan, and Burcaw failed to timely file two semi-annual campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Section 84200 (1 count). The 2018 Committee, Hallinan, and Burcaw impermissibly contributed \$3,000 to the 2020 Committee after the funds had become surplus, in violation of Government Code Section 89519 (1 count). The 2020 Committee, Hallinan, and Burcaw failed to properly disclose receipt of a contribution from the 2018 Committee, in violation of Government Code Section 84211 (1 count). **Fine: \$7,500.**

Mass Mailings at Public Expense

In the Matter of North Yuba Water District; FPPC No. 20/917. Staff: Jenna C. Rinehart, Senior Commission Counsel and Jay Gehres, Special Investigator. North Yuba Water District was represented by its General Legal Counsel, Paul Boylan. The North Yuba Water District sent seven mass mailings that featured an elected officer at public expense, in violation of Government Code Sections 89001 and 89002 (7 counts). **Fine: \$22,000.**

II. The following are enforcement decisions approved through the streamline penalty process and were executed by the Chief of Enforcement per Regulation 18360.2 following the August 15, 2024, meeting. Decisions are listed by category and include a brief summary of each case and the total amount of any administrative fine in each case.

Behested Payments

In the Matter of Sergio Contreras; FPPC No. 20/931. Staff: Laura Columbel, Commission Counsel and George Aradi, Special Investigator. Sergio Contreras, a City Council Member for the City of Westminster, failed to timely file one behested payment report, in violation of Government Code Section 84224 (1 count) and failed to timely report a source of income on a 2017, 2018, and 2019 Annual Statements of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87207 (3 counts). **Fine: \$2,300 (Tiers One & Two).**

In the Matter of Mike Gipson; FPPC No. 24/544. Staff: James M. Lindsay, Chief of Enforcement and Vanessa Greer, Political Reform Consultant. Mike Gipson, current State Assemblymember representing District 65, failed to timely file nine behested payment reports, in violation of Government Code Section 84224 (9 counts). Chief Discretion was used in this matter. **Fine: \$1,800 (Tier One).**

Cash and In-Kind Contributions and/or Expenditures

In the Matter of Sophia Rodriguez for Board of Supervisors 2020-District 1 and Sophia S. Rodriguez; FPPC No. 23/456. Staff: Bridgette Castillo, Senior Commission Counsel. This matter arose from an audit performed by the Franchise Tax Board's Political Reform Audit Program. Sophia Rodriguez was an unsuccessful candidate for San Diego County Supervisor in the March 3, 2020 Primary Election. Sophia Rodriguez for Board of Supervisors 2020-District 1 was Rodriguez's candidate-controlled committee. Rodriguez served as the Committee's treasurer. The Committee and Rodriguez accepted cash contributions of \$100 or more, in violation of Government Code Section 84300 (1 Count). Chief Discretion was used in this matter. **Fine: \$502 (Tier One).**

Advertisements

In the Matter of Kansen Chu and Kansen Chu for Assembly 2022; FPPC No. 20/762. Staff: Jenna C. Rinehart, Senior Commission Counsel and Ann Flaherty, Special Investigator. Respondents were represented by Eric Lee and Tom Willis with Olson Remcho LLP. Kansen Chu was an unsuccessful candidate for State Assembly, District 24, in the June 7, 2022 Primary Election. Kansen Chu for Assembly 2022 was Chu's candidate-controlled committee. Chu served as the Committee's principal officer. The Committee and Chu failed to include the Committee's address and the "Paid for by" language on two mass mailings, in violation of Government Code Section 84305 and Regulation 18435 (2 counts). Additionally, the Committee and Chu created a Facebook and Twitter page that failed to include the required "Ad paid for by" followed by the Committee's name on each page's cover or header photo, in violation of Government Code Sections 84504.4 and 84504.3 (2 counts). The disclosure violations concerning the Facebook and Twitter pages are eligible for a Warning Letter and are included in the streamline stipulation as a \$0 penalty. **Fine: \$1,342 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of No Way Greenway – Vote No on Deceptive Measure D, FORT, and Matt Ferrell; FPPC No. 21/948. Staff: Alex Rose, Senior Commission Counsel. Respondents were represented by Gary Winuk of Kaufman Legal Group. No Way Greenway – Vote No on Deceptive Measure D was a local primarily formed committee in opposition to Measure D in the Santa Cruz County June 7, 2022 Primary Election. FORT was an independent expenditure

committee. Ferrell was the Treasurer for both committees. No Way Greenway and Ferrell failed to timely file a Statement of Organization and failed to include proper advertisement disclosures. FORT and Ferrell failed to timely file a semi-annual campaign statement and to include proper advertisement disclosures, in violation of Government Code Sections 84200, 84103, 84504.2, 84504, and 84502 (5 counts). Certain violations are eligible for a Warning Letter and are included in the streamline stipulation as a \$0 penalty. **Fine: \$1,054 (Tier One).**

Campaign Late Reporter

In the Matter of Supporters of Recall Pamela Price and Stacy Owens; FPPC No. 24/489. Staff: Jenna C. Rinehart, Senior Commission Counsel. Respondents were represented by Emily Andrews of Olson Remcho LLP. Supporters of Recall Pamela Price is a primarily formed ballot measure committee, formed to support the recall of Alameda County District Attorney Pamela Price. Stacy Owens serves as the Committee's treasurer. The Committee and Owens failed to timely disclose the Committee's date of qualification, in violation of Government Code Sections 84101 and 84103 (1 count) and failed to timely and accurately disclose the recipient committee's name for which it made a non-monetary contribution, in violation of Section 84211 (1 count). Additionally, the Committee and Owens failed to timely file an amendment to the statement of organization to change the Committee's designation and name to reflect that it was primarily formed, in violation of Government Code Section 84103 and Regulation 18247.5 (1 count), failed to timely file a quarterly campaign statement, in violation of Government Code Section 84202.3 (1 count), and failed to timely file a 10-day Report, in violation of Government Code Section 84204.5 (1 count). The disclosure violations concerning the Facebook and Twitter pages are eligible for a Warning Letter and are included in the streamline stipulation as a \$0 penalty. Chief Discretion was used in this matter. **Fine: \$3,700 (Tiers One & Two).**

Campaign Late Filer

In the Matter of Association of San Miguel Firefighters Local 1434, Patrick Carroll, and Damian Arruda; FPPC No. 22/772. Staff: Jaleena Evans, Commission Counsel. Association of San Miguel Firefighters Local 1434 is a local general purpose committee. Patrick Carroll previously served as the Committee's treasurer. Damian Arruda is the Committee's current treasurer. The Committee, Carroll, and Arruda violated the Act by failing to timely file one semi-annual campaign statement, two pre-election campaign statements, and one 24-Hour Report in violation of Government Code Sections 84200, 84200.5, and 84203. Chief Discretion was used in this matter. **Fine: \$941 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Campaign to Elect Maria G. Lopez for School Board 2015 and Maria Lopez; FPPC No. 20/1135. Staff: Jonathan Rivera, Commission Counsel and Carlie A. Haug, Staff Services Analyst. Maria Lopez was a successful candidate for the Lynwood Unified School District in the November 3, 2015 General Election. Campaign to Elect Maria G. Lopez for School Board 2015 was Lopez's candidate-controlled committee. The Committee failed to timely file four 24-Hour Reports, in violation of Government Code Section 84203 (4 counts). Chief Discretion was used in this matter. **Fine: \$927 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Brea Olinda Teachers Association PAC, Tamara O'Rourke; FPPC No. 20/1045. Staff: Chance Felkins, Commission Counsel. Brea Olinda Teachers Association PAC" is a general purpose committee. Tamara O'Rourke serves as the Committee's treasurer. The Committee and O'Rourke failed to timely file one pre-election campaign statement and one 24-Hour Report, in violation of Government Code Sections 84200.5 and 84204 (2 counts). Chief Discretion was used in this matter. **Fine: \$449 (Tier One).**

Statement of Economic Interests Late Filer

In the Matter of Vignesh Swaminathan; FPPC No. 24/077. Staff: Alex Rose, Senior Commission Counsel. Vignesh Swaminathan, a Member of 2000 Measure A Citizens Watchdog Committee for the City of Cupertino and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority/Sustainability Commissioner, failed to timely file 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022 Annual Statements of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87300 (4 counts). **Fine: \$800 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Gloria Molleda; FPPC No. 23/819. Staff: Marissa Corona, Commission Counsel and Special Investigator Kaitlin Angeloni. Gloria Molleda served as City Manager for the City of Rosemead. Molleda failed to timely file the 2018, 2019 and 2020 Annual Statements of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87302 (3 counts); and failed to timely disclose a loan on the 2019 Annual Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87207 (1 count). Chief Discretion was used in this matter. **Fine: \$800 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Cindy Rodas; FPPC No. 24/174. Staff: Alex Rose, Senior Commission Counsel. Cindy Rodas, Finance Director and Alternate Board Member of Pooled Liability Assurance Network Joint Powers Authority failed to timely file a 2020, 2022, and 2023 Annual Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87300 (3 counts). Certain violations are eligible for a Warning Letter and are included in the streamline stipulation as a \$0 penalty. **Fine: \$800 (Tier Two).**

In the Matter of Arturo Ramirez; FPPC No. 24/250. Staff: Alex Rose, Senior Commission Counsel. Arturo Ramirez, Planning Commissioner of the City of Lynwood, failed to timely file 2021, 2022, and 2023 Annual Statements of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87203 (3 counts). **Fine: \$600 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Marisa Llamas; FPPC No. 19/254. Staff: Laura Columbel, Commission Counsel and Alethea Perez, Special Investigator. The respondent was represented by Michael Schulte of Farley Law Firm. Marisa Llamas, a Planning Commissioner for the City of Farmersville, failed to timely file 2017 and 2019 Annual Statements of Economic Interest, in violation of Government Code Section 87203 (2 counts). **Fine: \$600 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Fabian Wesson; FPPC No. 24/87. Staff: Alex Rose, Senior Commission Counsel. Fabian Wesson, Board Member of the Science Center, failed to timely file 2022 and 2023 Annual and Leaving Office Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87300 (3 counts). **Fine: \$600 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Michelle Weed; FPPC No. 24/361. Staff: James M. Lindsay, Chief of Enforcement and Amber Rodriguez, Staff Services Analyst. Michelle Weed, a Board Member for the Northeastern Joint Powers Authority, failed to timely file an Assuming Office Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87202 (1 count). **Fine: \$400 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Rick Whisman; FPPC No. 24/027. Staff: Alex Rose, Senior Commission Counsel. Rick Whisman, Planning Commissioner for the City of Petaluma, failed to timely file a 2022 Annual Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87203 (1 count). **Fine: \$200 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Richard Hernandez; FPPC No. 24/033. Staff: Alex Rose, Senior Commission Counsel. Richard Hernandez, Planning Commissioner for the City of Carson, failed

to timely file a 2022 Annual Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87203 (1 count). **Fine: \$200 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Katherine Turner; FPPC No. 24/386. Staff: James M. Lindsay, Chief of Enforcement and Amber Rodriguez, Staff Services Analyst. Katherine Turner is represented by Ralph Cordova Jr. of Cordova Law and Consulting. Katherine Turner, a City Attorney for the City of Imperial, failed to timely file a 2022 Annual Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87203 (1 count). **Fine: \$200 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Andrea Cardenas; FPPC No. 23/305. Staff: Alex Rose, Senior Commission Counsel; Paul Rasey, Special Investigator. The respondent was represented by Richard Rios of Olson Remcho, LLP. Andrea Cardenas, as a Chula Vista City Councilmember, failed to timely report Grassroots Resources as a source of income on her 2022 Annual Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87207 (1 count). **Fine: \$100 (Tier One).**