

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

Press Office
999 E Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20463
Phone: 202-694-1220 Toll Free: 800-424-9530
www.fec.gov



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Contact: Judith Ingram
Julia Queen
Christian Hilland

Weekly Digest Week of October 24 – 28

COMMISSION MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

On October 25, the Commission held an [executive session](#).

On October 27, the Commission held an [open meeting](#).

ADVISORY OPINIONS

Advisory Opinions Issued

[Advisory Opinion 2016-11 \(Plains Cotton Growers\)](#). On October 27, the Commission approved an advisory opinion in response to a request from Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. (PCG), a membership organization, and Plains Cotton Growers Political Action Committee (PCGPAC). The Commission concluded that the requestors' proposal to solicit contributions from individual PCG members and to authorize other members to collect and transmit those contributions to PCGPAC is permissible under the Federal Election Campaign Act and Commission regulations. During the discussion, the Commission heard from the requestors' representative.

[Advisory Opinion 2016-14 \(11 Libertarian State Committees\)](#). On October 27, the Commission approved an advisory opinion in response to a request from 11 Libertarian State Committees (Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, Hawaii, Idaho, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, North Dakota and Texas). The Commission concluded that the Committees qualify as state committees of a national political party. During the discussion, the Commission heard from the requestors' counsel.

Advisory Opinion Considered

[Advisory Opinion Request 2016-12 \(Citizen Super PAC\)](#). On October 27, the Commission discussed and held over for further consideration two drafts in response to an advisory opinion request from Citizen Super PAC, an independent expenditure-only political committee. The requestor asks several questions regarding the regulatory consequences of its proposal to send emails to a candidate with a link to Citizen Super PAC's advertisement projects, including an ad

expressly advocating for that candidate, and the consequences of other potential actions taken by the requestor and that candidate. During the discussion, the Commission heard from the requestor's counsel.

ENFORCEMENT

The Commission made public two closed cases, as follows. For more information, see the case documents in the [Enforcement Query System](#).

[MUR 6875](#)

COMPLAINANT: James V. Lacy

RESPONDENTS: Steve Knight; and Steve Knight for Congress and Kelly Lawler, in her official capacity as treasurer (the Committee)

SUBJECT: The complaint alleged that the Committee failed to (1) include a statement of the candidate's approval in the disclaimer on radio advertisements it aired, (2) disclose campaign expenses related to travel that the candidate paid from personal funds, and (3) disclose costs related to a campaign billboard.

DISPOSITION: The Commission exercised its prosecutorial discretion and dismissed the matter. The Commission observed that (1) the violation was technical in nature and the advertisement at issue contained sufficient identifying information to prevent the public from being misled as to its source, (2) the unreported financial activity was *de minimis*, and (3) the Committee took remedial action by amending its report.

[MUR 6954](#)

COMPLAINANT: American Democracy Legal Fund

RESPONDENTS: James S. Gilmore; and Gilmore for America, LLC and Karen F. Marcus, in her official capacity as treasurer (the Committee)

SUBJECT: The complaint alleged that Gilmore failed to file a declaration of candidacy for president in 2016 in a timely manner.

DISPOSITION: The Commission found no reason to believe Gilmore failed to register as a candidate in a timely manner or that the Committee failed to register and report as a principal campaign committee in a timely manner because the available information indicates Gilmore had not met the \$5,000 candidacy threshold by the date alleged in the complaint.

AUDITS

[Audit Division Recommendation Memorandum on Conservative Campaign Committee](#). On October 24, the Commission approved the Audit Division Recommendation Memorandum on the Conservative Campaign Committee. The Commission approved findings related to reporting of apparent independent expenditures and failure to file 24/48-hour reports for independent expenditures, and recordkeeping for communications.

OUTREACH

On October 25, Commissioner Ann M. Ravel discussed the role and work of the Commission with a group of students at the University of California, Washington Center in Washington, D.C.

On October 26, Commissioner Ravel discussed Commission operations and campaign finance law with politicians, journalists and activists from Central and South America visiting the U.S. as part of the State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program.

On October 26, Commissioner Ravel discussed Commission operations and campaign finance law with prominent leaders from political parties, civil society, local communities, NGOs and the media from Africa visiting the U.S. as part of the State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program.

On October 27, Commissioner Ellen L. Weintraub participated in a panel discussion on "*Citizens United: Short-and Long-Term Strategies to Restore Our Democracy*" presented by the American Constitution Society chapter of Stetson University College of Law in St. Petersburg, Florida.

On October 27, Commissioner Weintraub spoke at an event entitled "*Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission: Dangerous Consequences for Democracy*" presented by the Temple Beth-El and The Leif Nissen Foundation in St. Petersburg, Florida.

On October 28, Communications Specialist Isaac Baker discussed the role and work of the Commission with a Near East and North African delegation visiting the United States as part of the State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program.

On October 28, Reports Analysis Division Party/Non-Party Branch Chief Mike Hartsock and Assistant Branch Chief Rosa Marshall discussed reporting and compliance at the National Institute for Lobbying and Ethics Seminar in Washington, D.C.

RULEMAKING AND AGENCY PROCEDURES

[Proposed Amendments to Directive 52](#). On October 27, the Commission held over discussion on amendments to Directive 52, which governs the agency's circulation vote procedures.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTS

October 27: Pre-General Reports were due. For more information on reporting dates, refer to the [2016 Reporting Dates page](#) of the Commission website.

PRESS RELEASES

[FEC Issues Two Advisory Opinions and Approves Audit Findings](#) (issued October 27)

[FEC Cites Committees for Failure to File October Quarterly Financial Report](#) (issued October 28)

UPCOMING COMMISSION MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

November 15: The Commission is scheduled to hold an [executive session](#).

November 17: The Commission is scheduled to hold an [open meeting](#).

Meeting dates are subject to change. Please contact the Press Office the week of the scheduled meeting for confirmation.

UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

November 16: Webinar on Winding Down the Campaign & Post-General Reporting. Additional information is available on the [Educational Outreach](#) page of the Commission website.

UPCOMING REPORTING DUE DATES

December 8: Post-General Reports are due. For more information on reporting dates, refer to the [2016 Reporting Dates page](#) of the Commission website.

DISCLOSURE INITIATIVES

Commission staff, together with our partners at 18F, continue to add new features to the agency's [beta.fec.gov](#) website. The Commission encourages website visitors to submit comments and questions by clicking on the “Feedback” tab at the bottom of each page.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH MATERIALS

Additional research materials about the agency, campaign finance information, and election results are available through the [Library section](#) of the Commission website.

The [2016 edition of the Combined Federal State Disclosure and Election Directory](#) is available in the [Public Records](#) section of the Commission website. This publication identifies the federal and state agencies responsible for the disclosure of campaign finances, lobbying, personal finances, public financing, candidates on the ballot, election results, spending on state initiatives and other financial filings.

The Commission has published the [October Record](#) newsletter. [Sign up](#) to receive email notification when new Record articles are posted.

The 2016 edition of [Title 11 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) can be downloaded from the website. To order printed copies, call (800) 424-9530 (press 6) or send an email to info@fec.gov.

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