

P A - L A W Y E R - F U N D

Via Electronic Mail Onlycela@fec.gov

June 13, 2023

Office of Complaints Examination & Legal Examination
Federal Election Commission
Attn: Christal Dennis, Paralegal
1050 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20463

Re: PA Lawyer Fund, RR 23L-25
Response to Notice from the Office of General Counsel

Dear Sirs and Madams:

This letter is written in response to the correspondence dated June 8, 2023 from your office with respect to a referral from the Reports Analysis Division ("RAD") of the Federal Election Commission (the "FEC"), for possible enforcement action as a result of a failure of the PA Lawyer Fund ("PALF") to file one (1) 24-Hour Report to support eight (8) independent expenditures, which were disclosed in PALF's 2022 30-Day Post-General Report.

PALF was formed on October 28, 2022, as an independent expenditure political action committee. PALF was the first independent expenditure committee of the treasurer. Prior to the formation of PALF reviewed filing deadlines documented on the FEC's website, conducted an initial review of filing requirements and deadlines, and, from this review, took note of the generally submitted pre-election, post-election, quarterly, semi-annual, and year-end reporting obligations of PALF.

This review was inaccurately read to indicate that said 24-Hour Reports and 48-Hour Reports were filed only by authorized candidate political campaign committees and their respective affiliated authorized political committees to report late contributions to said committees within in 24 or 48 Hours of receipt of any said contribution (with

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the variable between a 24-Hour Report and a 48-Hour Report being the date between the contribution and the actual election day).

Given this incorrect interpretation and, since PALF was an independent expenditure only committee, PALF had calendared that the only required filing deadlines are those generally required on quarterly, pre-, and post-election, semi-annual, and year-end periods. At said time, PALF did not correctly interpret the 24-Hour and 48-Hour reporting requirements as applicable to independent expenditure only committees, such as PALF.

On Friday, November 4, 2022, PALF disbursed funds for eight (8) independent expenditures, with a public distribution/dissemination date of Saturday, November 5, 2022. These independent expenditures were for the general election scheduled for Tuesday, November 8, 2022. On November 18, 2022, PALF timely filed a 30-Day Post-General Report with the FEC, reporting the eight (8) independent expenditures. On December 23, 2022, PALF timely filed a Year-End 2022 report with the FEC.

On March 6, 2023, the FEC issued a Request for Additional Information ("RFAI") to PALF, that noted that PALF may have failed to timely file one (1) 24-Hour Report of independent expenditures, referencing the 2022 30-Day Post-General Report that PALF filed on November 18, 2022.

Upon receipt of the RFAI, PALF conducted a second and extensive review of the FEC's statutory filing requirements and implementing regulations. With the issuance of the RFAI, PALF, on March 7, 2023 (the day following the issuance of the RFAI) promptly filed the one (1) 24-Hour Report of independent expenditures, to remedy the filing error that first became apparent with the issuance of the RFAI. The lack of the one (1) 24-Hour Report was not intentional and inadvertent given PALC's initial review of the filing deadlines for independent expenditure only.

Moreover, PALF undertook affirmative steps to prevent any reoccurrence. Specifically, PALF developed an internal reporting calendaring system, that contained tickler dates for all required reports as well as dates for when any 24-hour or 48-hour reports would be due prior to any future election. Moreover, PALC designated a specific outside, non-affiliated individual, Sid Hawach, to serve as an external compliance assistant who was separate and apart from PALF, to continually review all filing deadlines, independent expenditure dates, maintain a reporting calendar to supplement that of a PALF treasurer and ensure that all necessary reports would be timely filed.

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On or about May 17, 2023, RAD contacted PALF to discuss the underlying 24-Hour Report and ensure that PALF would remain complaint with all filing deadlines, reviewing the same with PALF. Further, RAD advised PALF to file the FEC Form 99 to publicly clarify the public record. On the same day, the PALF treasurer, for a third instance, reviewed all relevant FEC campaign finance reporting rules and regulations, to ensure that PALF would have full knowledge and strictly adhere to all necessary obligations, reporting and other.

On May 17, 2023, PALF filed the FEC Form 99, publicly advising the FEC of the above, as well as the unintentional failure to file a 24-Hour Report, when due, given the inaccurate initial review by PALF, in the first instance, of what was interpreted to be the applicable filing requirements for an independent expenditure only committee.

Given the complication that the underlying lack of filing of one (1) 24-Hour Report and the burden the same has placed on the FEC with respect to the FEC's internal compliance protocols, it was decided that PALF would no longer operate. On May 26, 2023, PALF refunded all remaining contributions. On June 13, 2023, PALF filed its 2023 Mid-Year Report. Effective the date of the contribution refunds, PALF ceased accepting any contributions and thereafter made no and will not make any further independent expenditures; rather, PALF intends to file a termination report once notice is provided that the matter now referred, is closed. Until then, PALF will not accept any contributions or make any further independent expenditures.

Nonetheless, PALF does indeed acknowledge an initial incorrect reading of the relevant filing requirements when reviewed in the first instance, in that 24-Hour and 48-Hour reports are deemed applicable to independent expenditure only committees. Upon receipt of the RFAI, PALF immediately complied and thereafter, ensured clarification and accuracy of the underlying 24-Hour and 48-Hour reporting requirements for independent expenditure only committees and, instituted internal measures to prevent a recurrence of the same. This was an incorrect reading and application of the relevant reporting requirements and the applicability of some to independent expenditure only committees, such as PALF. Further, PALF has no prior violations or any other reporting concerns, other than that discussed herein. Finally, upon conclusion of this referral, PALF will file a termination report, thereby officially ceasing its existence.

PALF respectfully requests that the FEC exercise its discretionary authority and dismiss this referral. In support of such, PALF requests that the FEC take notice of the information contained herein, PALF's acknowledgment of the incorrect interpretations at the time of PALF's organization, PALF's subsequent measures to

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ensure PALF's compliance, PALF's taking immediate remediation measures upon issuance of the RFAI and its otherwise timely filed reports, as well as the fact that PALF will terminate immediately upon conclusion of this referral.

For the foregoing reasons, PALF respectfully requests that this matter be dismissed and that PALF be permitted to terminate as a registered committee with the FEC.

Very Truly Yours,

PA LAWYER FUND

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raymond G. Lahoud". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" and "L".

Raymond Lahoud