

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 September 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, September 19, 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.

Campaign Late Filer

In the Matter of Think Long Committee, Inc., Sponsored by Nicolas Berggruen Institute Trust (501c4), Nicolas Berggruen Institute Trust, and James Sutton; FPPC No. 20/569. Staff: Jonathan Rivera, Commission Counsel. Think Long Committee, Inc., Sponsored by Nicolas Berggruen Institute Trust (501c4) was represented by James Harrison of Olson Remcho, LLP. Think Long Committee, Inc., Sponsored by Nicolas Berggruen Institute Trust (501c4), was a primarily formed ballot measure committee. James Sutton served as the Committee's treasurer. Nicolas Berggruen Institute Trust was a major donor committee for the calendar year 2019. Think Long Committee, Inc., Sponsored by Nicolas Berggruen Institute Trust (501c4), failed to timely file one pre-election campaign statement and two 24-Hour Reports in violation of Government Code Sections 84200.5, 84200.8, and 84215 (3 counts). Nicolas Berggruen Institute Trust failed to timely file one 24-Hour Report, in violation of Government Code Section 84203 (1 count). **Fine: \$12,000.**

Default Proceedings

In the Matter of Ramos for City Council 2018, Committee to Elect Daniel Ramos Adelanto City Council 2020, Daniel Ramos, Arley Arsineda; FPPC No. 19/464. Staff: Alex Rose, Senior Commission Counsel and Ann Flaherty, Special Investigator. Daniel Ramos was an unsuccessful candidate for the Victorville City Council in the November 6, 2018 General Election and a successful candidate for the Adelanto City Council, in the November 3, 2020 General Election. Ramos for City Council 2018 (the "Victorville Committee") and Committee to Elect Daniel Ramos Adelanto City Council 2020 (the "Adelanto Committee") are Daniel Ramos' candidate-controlled committees. Arsineda served as the Adelanto Committee's treasurer. The Committees, Daniel Ramos, and Arsineda failed to

timely file a Statement of Organization, in violation of Government Code Section 84103 (1 count); sixteen semi-annual campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Section 84200 (8 counts), and four pre-election campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Section 84200.5 (4 counts). Additionally, the Adelanto Committee, Daniel Ramos, and Arsineda failed to establish, maintain, and utilize a campaign bank account, in violation of Government Code Section 85201 (1 count). **Fine: \$37,500.**

In the Matter of Kern Neighborhoods for Responsible Regulation in Support of Measure J and Tim Blakeley; FPPC No. 18/976. Staff: Marissa Corona, Senior Commission Counsel and Kaitlin Osborn, Special Investigator. Kern Neighborhoods for Responsible Regulation in Support of Measure J was a primarily formed committee in support of Measure J, a measure on the ballot in the November 6, 2018 General Election. The Committee's acting treasurer and principal officer was Tim Blakeley. The Committee and Blakeley failed to timely file two semi-annual campaign statements, in violation of the Government Code Section 84200 (1 count), failed to timely file a pre-election campaign statement, in violation of Government Code Section 84200.5, subdivision (a) and 84200.8, subdivision (b) (1 count), failed to timely file a 24-Hour Report, in violation of Government Code Section 84203 (1 count) and failed to accurately report contributions, in violation of Government Code Section 84211, subdivision (f) (1 count). Additionally, the Committee and Blakeley failed to keep accurate records, in violation of Government Code Section 84104 (2 counts), received cash contributions of \$100 or more, in violation of Government Code Section 84300, subdivision (a) (1 count) and made cash expenditures of \$100 or more, in violation of Government Code Section 84300, subdivision (b) (1 count). **Fine: \$29,000.**

In the Matter of Augusto Caudillo; FPPC No. 22/191. Staff: Cinthya Bernabé, Commission Counsel. Augusto Caudillo, a Planning Commissioner to the City of Lompoc between January 20, 2021, and April 13, 2023, failed to timely file an Assuming Office, a 2021 Annual, a 2022 Annual, and a Leaving Office Statement of Economic Interest, in violation of Government Code Sections 87200, 87202, 87203, and 87204 (4 counts). **Fine: \$16,000.**

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 September 19, 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 Rob Bonta; FPPC No. 21/738. Staff: Theresa Gilbertson, Senior Commission Counsel. Bonta was represented by Amber Maltbie of Nossaman, LLP. Bonta, in his capacity as a member of the Assembly, failed to timely file four behested payment reports, in violation of Government Code Section 84224 (4 counts). Three of these counts are eligible for a warning letter and are included in the streamline stipulation as a \$0 penalty. **Fine: \$200 (Tier One).**

Campaign Bank Account

In the Matter of Robert Fox for Long Beach City Council 2020; Robert Fox. FPPC No. 20/913. Staff: Laura Columbel, Commission Counsel and George Aradi, Special Investigator. Robert Fox was an unsuccessful candidate for Long Beach City Council in the November 2, 2020 General Election. Robert Fox for Long Beach City Council 2020 was Fox's candidate-controlled committee. The Committee and Fox failed to process \$25,343 through the campaign bank account over one reporting period, in violation of Government Code Section 85201 (1 count) and failed to maintain adequate records and documentation to fully substantiate the

campaign reporting, in violation of Government Code Section 84104 (1 count). **Fine: \$2,107 (Tier Two).**

Advertisements

In the Matter of Ling Kong for Milpitas School Board 2020, Ling Kong, and Liyun Sun; FPPC No. 20/339. Staff: Laura Columbel, Commission Counsel and Roone Peterson, Special Investigator. Ling Kong was an unsuccessful candidate for Milpitas School Board in the March 3, 2020 Primary Election. Ling Kong for Milpitas School Board 2020 was Kong's candidate-controlled committee. Liyun Sun served as the Committee's treasurer. The Committee and Sun failed to include the proper advertisement disclosures on two text messages and one email, in violation of Government Code Section 84504.3 (3 counts). **Fine: \$622 (Tier One).**

Campaign Late Filer

In the Matter of El Cajon Police Officers' Association, Travis Howard, and Jared Baxter; FPPC No. 22/771. Staff: Jaleena Evans, Commission Counsel. The El Cajon Police Officers' Association is a local general purpose committee. Travis Howard previously served as the Committee's treasurer, and Jared Baxter currently serves as the Committee's treasurer. The Committee, Howard, and Baxter failed to timely file two pre-election campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Section 84200.5 (2 counts); two 24-Hour Reports, in violation of Government Code Section 84203 (2 counts); and four semiannual campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Sections 84200 (4 counts). Certain violations 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: \$3,324 (Tiers One & Two).**

In the Matter of WIT – Whatever it Takes for Student Achievement Banning Teachers Association, Emilio Murillo, and Robert Walden; FPPC No. 19/1672. Staff: Theresa Gilbertson, Senior Commission Counsel, and Special Investigator Alethea Perez. WIT - Whatever it Takes for Student Achievement Banning Teachers Association is a local general purpose committee that was supportive of multiple candidates in local school district elections during the November 5, 2019, and November 8, 2022 General Elections. Emilio Murillo and Robert Walden served as treasurer and assistant treasurer respectively. The Committee, Murillo, and Walden failed to timely file at least six 24-Hour Reports, in violation of Government Code Section 84203 (6 counts); four pre-election campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Section 84200.5 (4 counts); and seven semi-annual campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Section 84200.5 (7 counts). The Committee, Murillo, and Walden failed to disclose activity to report certain expenditures made in support of candidates on the ballot, in violation of Government Code Section 84211 (4 counts.) The Committee, Murillo, and Walden produced at least six advertisements that did not include the name of the Committee as it was registered on the Statement of Organization filed with the Secretary of State, and failed to include the proper advertisement disclosures on at least two of these advertisements, in violation of Government Code Section 84502 (6 counts). Certain violations, including six semi-annual late filer violations, one pre-election non-reporting violation, and four advertisement violations 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: \$3,233 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Protect Portola Valley Schools-Yes on P and Tracy Hogan; FPPC No. 20/103. Staff: Marissa Corona, Senior Commission Counsel and Jay Gehres, Special Investigator. Protect Portola Valley Schools-Yes on P is a primarily formed ballot measure committee formed to support Measure P on the San Mateo County ballot in the March 3, 2020 Primary Election. Tracy Hogan is the treasurer and principal officer of the Committee. The Committee and Hogan failed to timely file two pre-election campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Section 84200.5 (2 counts), one semi-annual campaign statement, in violation of Government Code Section 84200 (1 count), two 24-Hour Reports, in violation of Government Code Section 84203 (2 counts), and failed to maintain adequate records, in violation of Government Code Section 84104 (1 count). Chief Discretion was used in this matter. **Fine: \$1,821 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Flewelling & Moody Inc.; FPPC No. 20/373. Staff Jonathan Rivera, Commission Council. Flewelling & Moody, a major donor committee for the calendar year 2020, failed to timely file one major donor campaign statement, in violation of Government Code Section 84200(b) (1 count) and three 24-Hour Reports, in violation of Government Code Section and 84203 (3 counts). **Fine: \$1,000 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Jamela Smith-Folds for School Board 2020, Jamela Smith-Folds, and Cameron Folds; FPPC No. 24/738. Staff: Jaleena Evans, Commission Counsel. Jamela Smith-Folds was a successful candidate for the Area 1 Trustee for West Contra Costa Unified School District Board in the November 3, 2020 General Election. Jamela Smith-Folds for School Board 2020 is Jamela Smith-Folds' local candidate-controlled committee. Cameron Folds is the Committee's treasurer. The Committee and Folds failed to timely file four semi-annual campaign statements in violation of Government Code Section 84200 (4 counts). Chief Discretion was used in this matter. **Fine: \$800 (Tier One).**

Statement of Economic Interests Late Filer

In the Matter of Kandi Thompson; FPPC No. 22/686. Staff: Laura Columbel, Commission Counsel and Jay Gehres, Special Investigator. Kandi Thompson, a Board Member for Amador County Office of Education and Board of Trustees Clerk for Amador County Unified School District, failed to timely file the 2021 Annual and a Leaving Office Statements of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87300 (2 counts). **Fine: \$1,400 (Tiers One & Two).**

In the Matter of Paul Steele; FPPC No. 24/019. Staff: Alex Rose, Senior Commission Counsel. Paul Steele, Isleton City Councilmember and Commissioner for the Delta Protection Agency, failed to timely file a 2022 Annual Statement of Economic Interests for both positions and a 2023 Annual Statement of Economic Interests for the City Council, in violation of Government Code Section 87203 (3 counts). Certain violations are eligible for a Warning Letter and are included in the streamline stipulation as a \$0 penalty. **Fine: \$600 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Francisco "Franky" Carrillo. FPPC No. 24/633. Staff: Laura Columbel, Commission Counsel and Ann Flaherty, Special Investigator. Franky Carrillo was a successful candidate for State Assembly, District 52 in the March 5, 2024 Primary Election. Carrillo failed to timely file the Candidate Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87201 (1 count). **Fine: \$300 (Tier One).**

Statement of Economic Interests Late Reporter

In the Matter of Herman Hernandez; FPPC No. 23/270. Staff: Chance Felkins, Commission Counsel. Respondent was represented by Mike Tucker of Edwards, Stevens & Tucker, LLP. Herman Hernandez, a current Board Member for the Sonoma County Board of Education, failed to disclose income on the 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023 Statements of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87206 (17 counts). Certain violations are eligible for a Warning Letter and are included in the streamline stipulation as a \$0 penalty. **Fine: \$1,600 (Tier One).**