

Complaint Description

[Andrew Saturn](#) (Fri, 11 Oct 2019 at 3:04 PM)

Every election cycle, The Stranger releases a special "Endorsements" issue. This past Wednesday (October 9, 2019), they released their November 2019 Endorsements issue. On the front cover was an improperly disclosed political advertisement for Egan Orion, a candidate for Seattle City Council District 3.

While there is a separate complaint about the lack of sponsor ID, Egan Orion is also violating 42.17A.335(1)(c) by implying he has the endorsement of The Stranger. The Stranger has endorsed Egan's opponent, incumbent Kshama Sawant, in both election cycles.

42.17A.335(1)(c) very clearly states "It is a violation of this chapter for a person to sponsor with actual malice a statement constituting libel or defamation per se ... Political advertising or an electioneering communication that makes either directly or indirectly, a false claim stating or implying the support or endorsement of any person or organization when in fact the candidate does not have such support or endorsement."

Egan Orion's intentional deception of purchasing a front-page ad in The Stranger's endorsements issue and intentionally not disclosing the political sponsorship implies that he, not Kshama Sawant, has the endorsement of The Stranger. If this statement were true, it would be a huge upset to Sawant's campaign, which has secured the endorsement of The Stranger in every election. It is very clear that Egan Orion is intending to deceive voters.

I would like to add that while an ad placed inside the issue is properly disclosed, the cover is arguably the more important one and where the disclosure should have been located.

This ad is the latest in a series of deceptive campaign statements and strategies from Egan Orion and his supporters. Over the spring and summer, Egan Orion put up posters across the district proclaiming "No Corporate PAC Money," even though Egan is the recipient of record levels of PAC spending and personally and directly appealed for PAC support.

Egan Orion should be forced to explain that he does not, in fact, have the endorsement of The Stranger as soon as possible, as the election takes place in fewer than 30 days, and the public will be unable to see any retraction or correction before The Stranger's next issue.

What impact does the alleged violation(s) have on the public?

Deceptive practice to imply Egan Orion has far more support than he actually does; attempting to unfairly influence an election.

List of attached evidence or contact information where evidence may be found.

Photos of advertisements mentioned in complaint.

List of potential witnesses with contact information to reach them.

Ben Demar, ad accountant for The Stranger, demar@thestranger.com

Complaint Certification:

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that information provided with this complaint is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

FREE EVERY OTHER MONDAY

OCT 9

the Stranger

ENDORSEMENTS

YOU
BETTER
VOTE!
P. 13

EGAN
ORION
FOR CITY COUNCIL D3

YOUR ACCESSIBLE &
ACCOUNTABLE VOICE FOR:

- ✓ SHELTER AS A HUMAN RIGHT
- ✓ MORE HOUSING DENSITY IN
- ✓ A MORE TRANSPARENT
- ✓ BUILD OUT

WAND ADVERTISEMENT

90% OF CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM SEATTLE RESIDENTS

**NO
CORPORATE
PAC
MONEY**

EGAN ORION
FOR CITY COUNCIL D3

PAID FOR BY EGAN FOR SEATTLE
1143 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR WAY #33 SEATTLE WA 98107
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