



State of Washington
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

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May 19, 2020

Delivered electronically to Chad Searls at chadsearls@gmail.com and chadsearls@hotmail.com

Subject: Complaint generated by PDC Staff, PDC Case 61437

Dear Mr. Searls:

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) has completed its investigation, initiated on February 12, 2020, of the staff-generated complaint generated on December 19, 2019, alleging that you committed violations of RCW 42.17A in the 2019 election year.

Specifically, the complaint alleged that you failed to timely register as a candidate within two weeks of declaring candidacy (RCW 42.17A.205).

RCW 42.17A.205 requires political candidates to file a candidate registration report with the Commission within two weeks of declaring candidacy. The candidate registration report is required to include the name, address, and electronic contact information of its treasurer and depository, including the names, addresses, and titles of officers.

PDC staff reviewed the applicable statute(s), rule(s), and reporting requirements; and the response submitted by your campaign.

As a result of the investigation, staff found the following:

Alleged failure to timely file a Candidate Registration (C-1) report for 2019 election year (RCW 42.17A.205).

- On November 18, 2019, you filed a complaint against your opponent, Drew Hooper, for among other things, failure to register as a candidate (complaint 60224/case 60336). In the course of investigating the complaint against Drew Hooper, staff discovered that you and Drew Hooper both failed to file C-1 reports for election year 2019.
- On November 22, 2019, PDC staff did an outreach informing you that the PDC did not have any C-series reports for your 2019 election year. You did not respond.
- On December 6, 2019, PDC staff sent you a second email to a different email address, to which you responded by phone stating that you filed the C-1 report on November 11, 2019 (report CF-17830). Upon review, PDC staff discovered that you had amended your 2011 report instead of filing a new one for the 2019 election year. You indicated that you would file a new C-1 report for 2019.

- As of December 19, 2019, you had not filed a new C-1 report for 2019 election year so staff opened a staff-generated complaint to address the missing C-1 report.
- On May 17, 2019, you registered your candidacy with the Office of the Secretary of State (SOS). Your C-1 report was due no later than two weeks of declaring your candidacy.
- On May 8, 2020, you filed a C-1 report for the 2019 election year and selected the mini-reporting option. This report was due no later than May 31, 2019, and was thus filed 343 days late, and 185 days after the November 5, 2019 general election.

While our investigation found that you failed to timely file a C-1 report in 2019, we found no prior PDC violations against you and note that your candidacy was unsuccessful.

Pursuant to WAC 390-37-060(1)(d), this letter constitutes a formal written warning to you concerning the failure to timely file a Candidate Registration (C-1) report with the PDC. Staff expects you will timely file all required statutory reports in the future. The Commission will consider the formal written warning in deciding on further Commission action if there are future violations of PDC laws or rules.

Based on this information, the PDC has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1).

If you have questions, you may contact Erick Agina at (360) 586-2869, toll-free at 1-877-601-2828, or by e-mail at pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/ Peter Lavallee

Peter Lavallee
Executive Director

