



**State of Washington
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION**

711 Capitol Way Rm. 206, PO Box 40908 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0908

(360) 753-1111 • FAX (360) 753-1112

Toll Free 1-877-601-2828 • E-mail: pdc@pdc.wa.gov • Website: www.pdc.wa.gov

October 1, 2020

Sent electronically to mark@northcreeklaw.com and ron@ronmuzzall.com

Subject: Complaint filed by Alex Bond, PDC Case 74003

Dear Ron Muzzall:

Enclosed is a copy of an electronic letter sent to Alex Bond concerning a complaint filed July 22, 2020 with the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) alleging a violation of RCW 42.17A.405 by accepting an over-limit contribution from an affiliated entity, specifically accepting \$2,000 from The Leadership Council and then an additional \$1,000 from WA Forward (The Leadership Council), an affiliated committee.

As noted in the letter below, the PDC has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1) and will not be conducting a more formal investigation into these allegations or taking further enforcement action in this matter.

PDC staff is reminding you about the importance of compliance with RCW 42.17A.405 and PDC staff expects your Campaign will adhere to the contribution limits for the remainder of the 2020 election cycle and not accept any contributions that exceed the contribution limits in the future, as required by law.

If you have questions, contact Alice Fiman toll-free at 1-877-601-2828, or by e-mail at pdc@pdc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Endorsed by,

/s

Alice Fiman
Compliance Officer

/s

Barbara Sandahl
Deputy Director
For Peter Lavalley
Executive Director



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Toll Free 1-877-601-2828 • E-mail: pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov • Website: www.pdcca.gov

October 1, 2020

Sent electronically to alexjbond@gmail.com

Subject: Complaint regarding Ron Muzzall, PDC Case 74003

Dear Alex Bond:

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) completed its review of the complaint you filed July 22, 2020.

Your complaint alleged Ron Muzzall, who was appointed to Washington State Senate from the 10th District in October 2019 and is a candidate for the same position in 2020, violated RCW 42.17A.405 by accepting contributions from an affiliated entity, when aggregated, exceeded the contributions limits for a 2020 legislative candidate of \$1,000 each for the primary and general elections.

PDC staff reviewed the allegations; the applicable statutes, rules, and reporting requirements and the response from Mark Lamb, attorney for Ron Muzzall, to determine whether the record supports a finding of one or more violations. Based on staff's review, we found the following:

- Ron Muzzall was appointed to the Washington State Senate in October 2019 and is a current candidate for the Washington State Senate from the 10th District.
- On December 13, 2019, Friends of Ron Muzzall (Campaign) timely filed a Monetary Contributions (C-3) report disclosing receipt of two \$1,000 contribution from the Leadership Council, a caucus-related political committee registered with the PDC. The contributions were received December 12, 2020, with one designated for the 2020 Primary Election and one designated for the 2020 General Election.
- On July 12, 2020, the Campaign timely filed a C-3 report disclosing a \$1,000 contribution received July 8, 2020 from WA Forward, a political committee registered with the PDC, and designated for the 2020 Primary Election.
- RCW 42.17A.405 limits Legislative candidates to receiving \$1,000 in total contributions for the 2020 primary election from any one contributor, including from a political action committee (PAC), and \$1,000 in total contributions for the 2020 general election.
- In addition, WAC 390-16-309 (3) states "...two or more entities shall be treated as one entity and share a contribution limit under RCW 42.17A.405 and 42.17A.410 if one of the entities is established, financed, maintained or controlled by the other."

- WA Forward (The Leadership Council) disclosed, as part of its PDC Committee Registration, it is sponsored by The Leadership Council. In 2020, WA Forward disclosed the receipt of \$550,000 in total aggregate contributions from The Leadership Council and only received contributions from an additional 10 individuals of \$10 each.
- Based on the PDC statute and rule referenced above, WA Forward (The Leadership Council) and The Leadership Council are affiliated and share one contribution limit for the 2020 election cycle. Therefore, the two PACs are limited to a maximum \$1,000 total contribution for the 2020 general election between them.
- Once notified of the complaint, the Campaign promptly filed an amended C-3 report August 18, 2020 removing the \$1,000 contribution received from WA Forward (The Leadership Council) and noting the refunded contribution in its books of account.
- Lamb stated “None of the campaigns were aware that WA Forward arguably shares a contribution limit with the Leadership Council. Upon learning that this affiliation might be an issue they promptly returned the contribution to WA Forward.”

Based on these findings, staff has determined in this instance, the Campaign’s acceptance of over-limit contribution from an affiliated entity does not amount to a finding of a violation that warrants further investigation based on the facts that as of July 14, 2020: (1) the campaign had received contributions totaling \$189,539.94 and had \$20,588.09 as a cash on hand balance; and (2) the \$1,000 contribution received from Washington Forward had not been spent by the Campaign.

Based on these findings, and the fact Muzzall is a first-time candidate and refunded the contribution promptly when notified of the requirement, staff has determined in this instance the failure to include party identification does not amount a violation warranting further investigation.

PDC staff is reminding Ron Muzzall about the importance of acceptance of an over-limit contribution from an affiliated entity in accordance with PDC laws and rules and PDC staff expects the Campaign will adhere to contribution limits for the remainder of the 2020 election cycle and not accept any contributions exceeding the contribution limits in the future, as required by law.

Based on this information, the PDC finds that no further action is warranted and has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1). If you have questions, contact Alice Fiman toll-free at 1-877-601-2828, or by e-mail pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Endorsed by,

/s

 Alice Fiman
 Compliance Officer

/s

 Barbara Sandahl
 Deputy Director
 For Peter Lavalley
 Executive Director