

[Cynthia Slizza](#) replied (Thu, 5 Sep 2024 at 8:07 AM)

To: "PDC Support" pdcc@pdc.wa.gov

External Email

Good morning Tabitha. Please find our email response to the complaints below.

Thank you.

Re: PDC - Slizza Donahue, Cynthia: Alleged Violations of RCW 42.17A.235 and .240 for failure to timely and accurately disclose contributions and expenditures on reports (EY23, Feb24)

The violation alleged in the complaint did occur. In late April of 2023, a portion of the campaign's financial activity was not properly documented. The flaw was not detected until the end of the campaign in August, when the final reports were being prepared and submitted. There was an intent to correct any affected reports already submitted and to file the campaign's final report before the September 11th, 2023 deadline. Unfortunately, the treasurer's family experienced illness which required an intense period of caregiving. The candidate's spouse also had a serious medical emergency that necessitated multiple hospital stays during this time. An error in record keeping resulted, which further delayed reporting of the campaign's finances. Therefore the final report was inadvertently not completed and filed.

There was no malicious intent in the reporting errors. The candidate and treasurer maintained a good faith effort toward providing timely and accurate details of campaign finances.

The complainant highlighted shortcomings of the reporting process. However, criticizing an underfunded state agency by repeatedly pointing out reporting errors that were not detected by its overburdened agency staff is not a productive method to initiate reforms. While educational, the mass identification of reporting errors of well intentioned volunteer record keepers has detrimental consequences. Penalizing those volunteers, and political candidates who put themselves forward to serve their communities, will no doubt cause many to avoid any future participation in the political process. We hope Mr. Conner Edwards would consider this side effect, but wonder if this may be his actual intent.

I encourage the Public Disclosure Commission to issue educational warnings instead of financial penalties for all related and remedied complaints filed by Mr. Edwards. We hope you will also excuse our campaign's unintentional errors with a warning so as not to negatively impact the financial standing of the candidate's family.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Cynthia Donahue