

Respondent Name
The Pend Oreille County Democrats
Complainant Name
Conner Edwards
Complaint Description
<p>Conner Edwards reported via the portal (Sat, 21 Dec 2024 at 1:59 PM)</p> <p>Description of Complaint</p> <p>See attached complaint.</p> <p>Notice to Respondent</p> <p>I apologize to you for any inconvenience caused by this complaint. The chance that you will actually be fined for the violations identified above is extremely small because the agency is averse to doing the work necessary to bring cases to hearings. Most likely this case – and any future cases against you – will simply be dismissed by staff.</p> <p>This complaint is one of hundreds that I have filed to highlight and ultimately fix the significant shortcomings associated with the agency responsible for administering our state’s campaign finance laws.</p> <p>What are these shortcomings?</p> <p>Overcomplicated and outdated requirements that are difficult to understand and comply with. Failure to properly educate the regulated community about the tasks they must perform to remain in compliance with applicable requirements and avoid complaints. Failure of the agency to send regular reminders to filers about pending deadlines. A failure to proactively enforce applicable requirements which enables the complaint system to become weaponized. Non-intuitive, non-user friendly, and buggy reporting software. Failure to meaningfully enforce core requirements. Failure to follow the best operating practices of other neighboring campaign finance agencies. An agency leadership structure that largely disregards stakeholder input and is slow to identify and resolve major agency deficiencies.</p> <p>I believe that the best way to motivate the agency to address these problems is by filing a large number of complaints so that the agency’s problems become impossible to ignore.</p> <p>Slowly (too slowly) this strategy is starting to yield concrete and beneficial changes. You can read about these changes here: https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/politics/why-one-man-filed-800-campaign-finance-complaints-against-wa-candidates/</p> <p>If you believe that the agency could have done something different to help you proactively avoid the issues identified in this complaint, I hope that you will consider including it in your response. The agency, and the public, can benefit from your perspective and feedback.</p> <p>“I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept.” — Angela Davis</p>
What impact does the alleged violation(s) have on the public?
See complaint. The PDC has an obligation to provide transparency to the voters by enforcing disclosure requirements. The agency’s failure to actively monitor compliance with these requirements and enforce them damages both the public and members of the regulated community.
List of attached evidence or contact information where evidence may be found
See complaint and also PDC website.
List of potential witnesses with contact information to reach them
See complaint and also PDC website.
Certification (Complainant)

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.

THE PEND OREILLE COUNTY DEMOCRATS

(POCDemocrats)

2024

- Overview
- Contributions
- Expenditures
- Pledges
- Debts
- Loans

Itemized Expenditures

\$10,566.81

Shown below are the campaign’s expenditures. Small expenses may be grouped together and reported as one sum. Donated goods and services (known as in-kind contributions) also appear here as expenditures, with the contributor listed in the recipient column.

Expenditures by Expense Type

Monetary contributions to PAC...

\$3,500.00

Other

\$1,950.00

Postage costs, mail permits,...

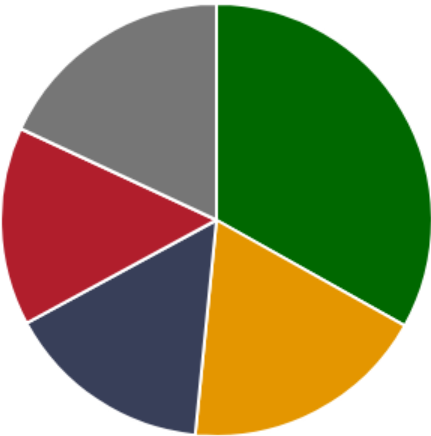
\$1,639.38

Not Provided

\$1,567.78

Miscellaneous

\$1,909.65



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Recipient Name

Enter text

X

Description

Enter text

X

Date

X

From

To

Recipient City

Enter text

X

Recipient State

Select

X

Amount

From

To

X

Show

50

▼

entries

[Download 26 rows as CSV.](#)

Recipient	Date	Description	Recipient City	Recipient State	Amount	Report
Amazon	08/13/2024		Seattle	WA	-\$216.49	View Report
Amazon	08/13/2024		Seattle	WA	-\$20.78	View Report
Amazon	07/31/2024	Not known	Seattle	WA	\$20.78	View Report
Amazon	07/31/2024	Unknown	Seattle	WA	\$216.49	View Report
COLUCCI BUDD	03/12/2024	Beef for St. Pats day	Newport	WA	\$12.63	View Report
Dave Upthegrove	10/04/2024	Monetary contributions to PAC or candidate	Seattle	WA	\$500.00	View Report
EXPENSES OF \$200.00 OR LESS	10/29/2024				\$162.20	View Report
EXPENSES OF \$200.00 OR LESS	09/01/2024				\$428.58	View Report
EXPENSES OF \$200.00 OR LESS	07/30/2024				\$409.35	View Report
EXPENSES OF \$200.00 OR LESS	05/01/2024				\$139.18	View Report
EXPENSES OF \$200.00 OR LESS	04/16/2024				\$68.98	View Report

Recipient	Date	Description	Recipient City	Recipient State	Amount	Report
EXPENSES OF \$200.00 OR LESS	04/02/2024				\$20.54	View Report
EXPENSES OF \$200.00 OR LESS	03/01/2024				\$178.03	View Report
EXPENSES OF \$200.00 OR LESS	02/06/2024				\$244.69	View Report
EXPENSES OF \$200.00 OR LESS	01/01/2024				\$153.50	View Report
Lamar Advertising	08/31/2024	Harris/Walz billboard	Spokane	WA	\$975.00	View Report
LAMAR COMPANIES	09/26/2024	Campaign Billboard	ATLANTA	GA	\$975.00	View Report
Liberty Mutual	07/31/2024	Liability Insurance	Fairfield	OH	\$500.00	View Report
NEWPORT MINER, INC	05/15/2024	display ad	Newport	WA	\$229.20	View Report
NEWPORT MINER, INC	05/09/2024	display ad	Newport	WA	\$235.50	View Report
Paul Rocky Dean	09/13/2024	Monetary contributions to PAC or candidate	Speingdale	WA	\$3,000.00	View Report
SCHUTTE KATHERINE	03/17/2024	Beef for St. Pats Day	NEWPORT	WA	\$19.21	View Report
USPS	07/31/2024	Postage costs, mail permits, purchase of stamps	Newport	WA	\$638.35	View Report
USPS	01/17/2024	Postage costs, mail permits, purchase of stamps	Newport	WA	\$1,001.03	View Report
Washington State Democrats	10/08/2024	Candidat signs	Seattle	WA	\$624.84	View Report
WEIR JOYCE	01/31/2024	Postage costs, mail permits, purchase of stamps	NEWPORT	WA	\$51.00	View Report

Showing 1 to 26 of 26 entries

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[1](#)
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Complaint Against: THE PEND OREILLE COUNTY DEMOCRATS

Submitted: 12/21/24

Notice to Respondent Due By: 12/31/24 per WAC 390-37-050(1)

90 Day Initial Hearing Deadline: 3/21/25 per RCW 42.17A.755(3)

Statutes Violated: RCW 42.17A.235, .240

Background

Washington State's Campaign Finance Disclosure Law

One of the primary purposes of the public disclosure law is to provide citizens of this state, and especially voters, with the means for becoming informed about the financing of political campaigns.¹ The public disclosure law was enacted through voter approval of Initiative 276 in 1972.

State law requires candidates and committees that register under full reporting to submit regular reports of financial activity. Those reports are filed on schedules outlined on the PDC's key reporting dates calendar.²

Violations

This C4 was filed approximately 9 months late, see link:

<https://apollo.pdc.wa.gov/public/registrations/campaign-finance-report/110265063> .

Additionally, this C3 was filed significantly late:

<https://apollo.pdc.wa.gov/public/registrations/campaign-finance-report/110259790> .

Additionally, there are a number of issues with respect to how this respondent described their expenditures, especially from the perspective of PDC staff.

For one expenditure to Amazon, it says simply "unknown". For the expenditures for billboards and Newport Miner ads, it doesn't include the run dates and it doesn't list which candidates were supported or opposed, which I know that staff believe is required. The in-kind from the state party for signs also doesn't include the quantity of signs.

Conclusion

I urge the PDC staff to take quick action and resolve the noncompliance identified in this complaint.

Best,

/s/

Conner Edwards
(425) 533-1677 cell

¹ <https://pdc.wa.gov/registration-reporting/candidates-committees/registration-reporting-basics>

² <https://pdc.wa.gov/registration-reporting/candidates-committees/registration-reporting-basics/key-dates-2024>

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**“You can’t make an omelet without breaking a few eggs.”
— François de Charette**