



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: pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov • Website: www.pdca.wa.gov

April 22, 2019

Delivered electronically to Nathan Gorton with Committee to Protect Tacoma's Future

Subject: Committee to Protect Tacoma's Future PAC, PDC Case 26347

Dear Mr. Gorton:

Below is a copy of an electronic letter sent to Ken Miller concerning the complaint he filed with the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) against Committee to Protect Tacoma's Future, a single-year political committee registered with the PDC in 2017. As noted below in the letter to Mr. Miller, the PDC will not be conducting a more formal investigation into these allegations or taking further enforcement action in this instance.

Based on these facts, the PDC has dismissed the allegations listed in the complaint filed against Committee to Protect Tacoma's Future PAC in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1).

If you have questions, please contact Kurt Young at (360) 664-8854, toll-free at 1-877-601-2828, or by email at kurt.young@pdcc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Endorsed by:

s/_____
Kurt Young
PDC Compliance Officer

s/_____
BG Sandahl, Deputy Director
For Peter Lavalley, Executive Director



Public Disclosure Commission
Shining Light on Washington Politics Since 1972



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April 22, 2019

Sent electronically to Ken Miller

Subject: Committee to Protect Tacoma's Future complaint; PDC Case 26347

Mr. Miller:

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) has completed its review of the complaint you filed on October 11, 2017 against Committee to Protect Tacoma's Future, a new single-year political committee registered with the PDC. The complaint alleged Committee to Protect Tacoma's Future may have violated RCW 42.17A.435 by concealing the true source of monetary contributions disclosed on Monetary Contributions reports (C-3 reports).

PDC staff reviewed the allegations listed in the complaint, the statutes, rules and reporting requirements for a political committee, queried the PDC contribution and expenditure database for Committee to Protect Tacoma's Future, reviewed the Committee Registrations (C-1pc reports), C-3 and Summary Full Campaign Contribution and Expenditure reports (C-4 reports) filed by the Committee to Protect Tacoma's Future (Committee), and the responses to the complaint provided by Nathan Gorton, Committee Campaign Manager. Based on staff's review, we found the following:

- On September 20, 2017, the Committee filed a C-1pc report with the PDC registering as a New Single-Year Committee for the 2017 election in support of Jim Merritt for Mayor of Tacoma, selecting the Full Reporting Option, and listing Mr. Gorton, Heather Clarke as Committee Treasurer, and Jessica Cameron as a Ministerial Administrative Assistant.
- For the 2017 election, the Committee received \$24,576 in total contributions and made expenditures totaling \$24,576. The Committee timely filed three C-3 reports disclosing \$22,600 in monetary contributions received.
- The C-3 reports disclosed: (1) two \$7,500 monetary contributions from the Washington Association of Realtors (WAR) and Build PAC received on September 29, 2017; (2) a \$7,500 monetary contributions from the Pierce County Affordable Housing Council, which changed its name to 2017 Master Builders Assn of Piece Co Affordable Housing Council (MBAPCAHC) received on October 10, 2017; and (3) a \$100 Miscellaneous Receipt from the Clarke Company to open the committee bank account.
- The Committee timely filed the 21-Day and 7-Day Pre-General Election C-4 reports, the Post-General Election C-4 report, and the December 2017 C-4 report. In addition, the Committee timely filed two C-6 reports as follows:

1. A C-6 report was timely filed on October 24, 2017 disclosing a \$7,600 independent expenditure direct mail piece in support of Jim Merritt that was presented to the public on October 23, 2017.
 2. A C-6 report was timely filed on October 30, 2017 disclosing a \$14,900 independent expenditure direct mail piece in support of Jim Merritt that was presented to the public on October 27, 2017.
- Your complaint alleged that the contributors to the Committee were also political committees (WAR, Build PAC, and MBAPCAHC), and that those contributing committees were somehow hiding or obscuring “donor’s identities”, “the original sources of funding”, or otherwise concealing the true source of the funds.
 - Staff’s review found that WAR, Build PAC, and MBAPCAHC are all political committees that have been registered and reporting with the PDC for years, and are affiliated with member associations involving realtors, builders, and contractors. The three political committees received contributions from its members that were timely disclosed on C-3 reports filed by WAR, Build PAC, and MBAPCAHC.
 - Mr. Gorton stated “Contrary to the assertions in the complaint, the Committee was not formed to obscure the names of contributors. All contributors to the Committee (and the political committees that support it) are timely filed with your agency and available for public viewing. The Committee has complied with, and takes seriously, its obligations under our State’s Fair Campaign Practices Act.” He stated Mr. Miller did not provide any evidence of cite any statute or rule that the Committee is alleged to have has violate, and instead he provided “a link to an online article in Seattle Met magazine regarding a Thurston County Superior Court case (currently on appeal) that does not involve the Committee or facts that are in any way analogous to this situation.”

PDC staff found no evidence of a material violation that would require conducting a more formal investigation into your complaints or pursuing enforcement action in this instance. As noted above, staff’s review found that the three political committees, WAR, Build PAC, and MBAPCAHC are all political committees that were registered as political committees with the PDC in 2017.

Based on this information, PDC staff is dismissing the allegations listed in your complaint in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1). If you have questions, you may contact me at (360) 664-8854, toll-free at 1-877-601-2828, or by e-mail at kurt.young@pdc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

s/_____
Kurt Young, PDC Compliance Officer

Endorsed by:

s/_____
BG Sandahl, Deputy Director
For Peter Lavalley, Executive Director

cc: Nathan Gorton, Committee to Protect Tacoma’s Future