



**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](mailto:pdc@pdc.wa.gov) • Website: [www.pdc.wa.gov](http://www.pdc.wa.gov)**

November 4, 2025

Delivered electronically to Dan Brady, Counsel & Pooneh Gray at [dan@danbradylaw.com](mailto:dan@danbradylaw.com) & [poonehgray@gmail.com](mailto:poonehgray@gmail.com)

Subject: PDC Case 180111 regarding Pooneh Gray

Mr. Brady & Ms. Gray:

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) completed its review of the complaint filed by Anthony Vendetti on October 13, 2025. The complaint alleged violations of RCW 42.17A.335 for sponsoring advertising containing a false statement of material fact about a candidate for public office.

Applicable Laws and Rules

[RCW 42.17A.335](#) states, in relevant part, that it is a violation of this chapter for a person to sponsor with actual malice a statement constituting libel or defamation per se including political advertising that contains a false statement of material fact about a candidate for public office.

Background and Findings

- Pooneh Gray is a 2025 candidate for Vancouver City Council running against, incumbent Council member Kim Harless.
- The complaint included a screenshot of a message posted on October 10, 2025, by Ms. Gray on her campaign Facebook page. The message stated, in part that "...Kim Harless has broken that trust by not declaring an obvious conflict of interest as she helped divert nearly \$30,000 of your money to her fiancé."
- The conflict-of-interest issue stems from a complaint filed by Brad Erhart with the Vancouver City Attorney's Office against Harless on August 28, 2025.
- A preliminary investigation of Erhart's complaint was conducted by the Vancouver City Attorney's Office, through Davis Wright Tremaine LLP. The investigation concluded that Harless did not violate the city's conflict of interest rules because she herself did not have a personal interest. It concluded that there was sufficient evidence that she had violated "Avoidance of the Appearance of Impropriety" rules.
- The city has referred Erhart's complaint to another outside firm for further review.
- In his response, Mr. Brady asserts that Ms. Harless has not contested the facts related to the PDC complaint and that there is evidence to support the conflict-of-interest allegations.

## Summary and Resolution

RCW 42.17A.335(1) states, in part, “It is a violation of this chapter for a person to sponsor with actual malice a statement constituting libel or defamation per se under the following circumstances: (a) Political advertising or an electioneering communication that contains a false statement of material fact about a candidate for public office...”

RCW 42.17A.005(1) states, "Actual malice" means to act with knowledge of falsity or with reckless disregard as to truth or falsity.

The statement at issue here does not meet the actual malice standard. Whether a conflict existed and was adequately declared is subject to individual interpretation, and is not constrained by a reading of the jurisdiction’s ethics rules alone.

Based on these findings, PDC staff have determined the Respondent’s social media post sharing their opinion does not warrant further investigation by the PDC. The PDC has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1).

If you have questions, contact Jennifer Hansen at 1-877-601-2828 or by e-mail at [pdcc@pdc.wa.gov](mailto:pdcc@pdc.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

Electronically signed by Jennifer Hansen  
Jennifer Hansen  
Compliance Officer

Endorsed by,

Electronically signed by Kim Bradford  
Kim Bradford  
Deputy Director  
For Peter Frey Lavalley  
Executive Director

cc: Anthony Vendetti