

STATE OF MICHIGAN RUTH JOHNSON, SECRETARY OF STATE DEPARTMENT OF STATE LANSING

May 20, 2014

Luanne Kondel Clerk, Village of Gaines 113 Genesee Street Gaines, Michigan 48436

Dear Ms. Kondel:

The Department of State (Department) received a formal complaint filed by Susan Somers against you, alleging that you violated the Michigan Campaign Finance Act (MCFA or Act), 1976 PA 388, MCL 169.201 et seq. The investigation and resolution of this complaint is governed by section 15 of the Act and the corresponding administrative rules, R 169.51 et seq. Copies of the complaint and supporting documentation are enclosed with this letter.

In Michigan, it is unlawful for a public body or individual acting on its behalf to use or authorize the use of "funds, personnel, office space . . . property . . . vehicles, equipment, supplies, or other public resources to make a contribution or expenditure [.]" MCL 169.257(1). A knowing violation of section 57 is a misdemeanor offense. MCL 169.257(3).

Ms. Somers alleges that you have improperly used public funds to further a recall effort.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the Department's examination of these matters and your right to respond to the allegations before the Department proceeds further. It is important to understand that the Department is neither making this complaint nor accepting the allegations as true.

If you wish to file a written response to this complaint, you are required to do so within 15 business days of the date of this letter. Your response may include any written statement or additional documentary evidence you wish to submit. All materials must be sent to the Department of State, Bureau of Elections, Richard H. Austin Building, 1st Floor, 430 West Allegan Street, Lansing, Michigan 48918. If you fail to submit a response, the Department will render a decision based on the evidence furnished by the complainant.

A copy of your reply will be provided to Ms. Somers, who will have an opportunity to submit a rebuttal statement to the Department. After reviewing all of the statements and materials provided by the parties, the Department will determine whether "there may be reason to believe that a violation of [the MCFA] has occurred [.]" MCL 169.215(10). Note that the Department's enforcement powers include the possibility of entering a conciliation agreement, conducting an administrative hearing, or referring this matter to the Attorney General for enforcement of the criminal penalty provided in section 57(3) of the Act.

Luanne Kondel May 20, 2014 Page 2

If you have any questions concerning this matter, you may contact me at (517) 241-0395.

Sincerely,

Lori A. Bourbonais Bureau of Elections

Michigan Department of State

c: Susan Somers

Reset Form

Daytime Telephone Number

Michigan Department of State Campaign Finance Complaint Form

This complaint form may be used to file a complaint alleging that someone violated the Michigan Campaign Finance Act (the MCFA, 1976 PA 388, as amended; MCL 169.201 et seq.).

Please print or type all information.

Section 1. Complainant

Your Name

I allege that the MCFA was violated as follows:

| Susan C Somers | | 810 635-4701 | 63 |
|--|--|--|---|
| Mailing Address | | | |
| 6331 Seymour Road | | | |
| City | State | Zip | |
| Swartz Creek | MI | 48473 | |
| OWARZ OFOOK | | | |
| | a a regres production as a six electric. | | |
| Section 2. Alleged Violator | | | |
| Name | | | |
| Village of Gaines Clerk, Luanne Kond | del | | |
| Mailing Address | | | |
| Village of Gaines, 113 Genesee | e Street | | |
| City | State | Zip | |
| Gaines | MI | 48436 | |
| - Canno | | | |
| | | | |
| Section 3. Alleged Violations (Use additional s | heet if more space | is needed.) | |
| C. H. (A) OR MOTHER 1.1.4.1. | - • • • • | en de la companya de | · |
| Section(s) of the MCFA violated: MCL 169.257 Sec. 5 | 57 (1) | | |
| | | | |
| Explain how those sections were violated: | Aut to PE and | | |
| | | | |
| Explanation on additional sheet - "Explana | tion of Alleged | violation" | |
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| The state of the s | t de essere and athen in | . Commetically | |
| Evidence that supports those allegations (attach copies of pertinent | documents and other in | normation): | |
| Evidence A, B, C, attached | | | |
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| X | Ipa ch | 05/07/2014 |
|---------|--|--|
| | Signature of Complainant | Date |
| Section | on 5. Certification without Evidenc | ce (Supplemental to Section 4) |
| under 1 | the circumstances, you are unable to dence, you may also make the follow | vledge, information, or belief, there are ving specifically identified factual ed by evidence after a reasonable |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Michigan Department of State Bureau of Elections Richard H. Austin Building – 1st Floor 430 West Allegan Street Lansing, Michigan 48918

Revised 06/03/2011

EXPLANATION OF ALLEGED VIOLATION.

To the best of my knowledge, I believe that Village of Gaines Clerk, Luanne Kondel is in violation of the MCFA, Sec. 57 (1)

On Tuesday, April 28, 2014, Ms. Kondel allegedly, engaged in circulating recall petitions for the recall of Gaines Township Supervisor, Charles Melki at the Village of Gaines municipal building, 113 Genesee Street, Gaines MI 48436. (See attached evidence, signed statements – Item A)

These signed statements show the date and time of day that the signatures for this particular recall petition were gathered, which was during normal business hours while Ms. Kondel was on paid duty and therefore being a person acting for a public body. (See attached evidence "Basic Info", "Hours" – Item B)

I believe this to be a violation of MCFA, Sec. 57(1) because Ms. Kondel was using office space, property, and/or other public resources such as building utilities as well as providing volunteer personal services to make a contribution to a recall effort. Furthermore I believe that this activity Ms. Kondel has engaged in, reflects a direct contribution to the "Donna Archenbault committee to recall Charles Melki, Supervisor." (See attached evidence, newspaper advertisment – Item C)

To Whom It May Concern:

On Tuesday April 29, 2014, at approximately 3:40 p.m., Village of Gaines Clerk, Luanne Kondell, Village of Gaines, 113 Genesee Street, Gaines 48436, invited me into the Village of Gaines municipal building. Once inside she offered and requested that I sign recall petitions for the recall of the Gaines Township Supervisor, Chuck Melki.

I signed this recall petition inside the Village of Gaines offices and when those petition are submitted to Genesee county will show my signature, printed name, address and date of signing of which I would like my signature to be eliminated from this particular petition that calls for the recall of Chuck Melki.

| Respectfully, | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Signature | had be |
| Signature | |
| Name | ROBERT RUWIPH |
| | |
| Address | 109 E. LORD ST. |
| | GAINES Mi 48436 |
| | |
| Date | 5/6/2014 |

To Whom It May Concern:

On Tuesday April 29, 2014, at approximately 4:15 p.m., Village of Gaines Clerk, Luanne Kondell, Village of Gaines, 113 Genesee Street, Gaines 48436, invited me into the Village of Gaines municipal building. Once inside she offered and requested that I sign recall petitions for the recall of the Gaines Township Supervisor, Chuck Melki.

I signed this recall petition inside the Village of Gaines offices and when those petition are submitted to Genesee county will show my signature, printed name, address and date of signing of which I would like my signature to be eliminated from this particular petition that calls for the recall of Chuck Melki.

Respectfully,

| Signature | far fr |
|-----------|-------------------|
| Name | NORMAN R POBLETTE |
| Address | 110 E CORD ST |
| | GAINET, MI 48436 |
| Date | 5-6-14 |

113 Genecus St Today 12:00 pm - 4:00
Gaines, Michigan 4:036 pm

Phone (989) 271-8386
Email gainesvillage@gmail.com

Basic Info

Joined Facebook

08/18/2010

Hours

Mon: 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm Tue - Wed: 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

Thu: 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Parking

Street

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Willer Od

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Chat (15)

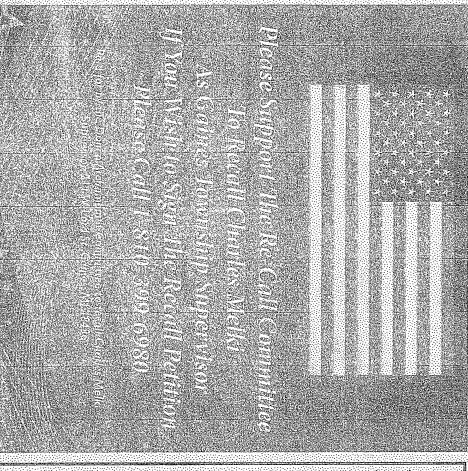
About

the village is located in the southwest corner of genesee county, it was founded in 1875.

icay indi

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Facebook © 2014 · English (US)



Sunday they are pushing the dust out of the way desperate people complaining about dust. They 90% of the calls I receive everyday are from 90 times more pollured than outdoor air. Yet, to dirty indoor air and our indoor air is up to statistics: 50% of all illness is a direct relation family at a time. By now we've all heard the tell me they dust the T,V, on Friday, but by L been improving our community's health one American Power Vac. Inc. For years, I've m Keith Meadows, owner and operator of

it's not because you're a bad housekeeper, I and none of them and the reason is, your cold air returns. ply having your ducts tell people that by simknow exactly where it's coming from Well, cleaned will drastically Dancing with the Stars, again so they can watch reduce household dust, I'm here to tell you that

suck in dirty air, and over time it builds up until you have the Cold air returns

would find in your vacuum bag same type of debris that you THE TAX THE DESIGNATION ASSESSED.

April and Keith Mendows help keep indoor air clean with their local business, American Power Vac.

I have ever had working in my home. They were very "One of the best companies

furnace moyes 2,000 CFM's (cubic feet of air twelve large air bags will come out of the right and that equipment is a Power Vye truck. It is the most powerful equipment in the indus-Perwerd To pur things into perspective, your roof. What makes the difference in equipment the size of an ambulance and when engaged and the truck motor powers, the equipment my. This is where the entire muck is the vacuum that is powerful enough to get the Job done You'll know it's a Power Vac truck because it's

CFM's. per minute), basically equipment. of any truck-mounted quadruple the power 16,000 cubic feet of air Power Vac moves over ment only moves 4,000 Truck-mounted equipout of your register what you feel coming per minute, more than American

that they are licensed and are ment and advertising nies using cheap equipcheap prices...most are unlicensed or advertise Beware of compar

Swartz Creek VIEW



State of Michigan Ruth Johnson, Secretary of State DEPARTMENT OF STATE Lansing

June 9, 2014

Susan C. Somers 6331 Seymour Road Swartz Creek, Michigan 48473

Dear Ms. Somers:

The Department of State received a response to the complaint you filed against Luanne Kondel, which concerns an alleged violation of the Michigan Campaign Finance Act (MCFA), 1976 P.A. 388, MCL 169.201 *et seq*. A copy of the response is provided as an enclosure with this letter.

If you elect to file a rebuttal statement, you are required to send it <u>within 10 business days</u> of the date of this letter to the Bureau of Elections, Richard H. Austin Building, 1st Floor, 430 West Allegan Street, Lansing, Michigan 48918.

Sincerely,

Lori A. Bourbonais
Bureau of Elections

Michigan Department of State

Spario Bombroneus

c: Luanne Kondel

LUANNE KONDEL

10347 BALDWIN RD

GAINES MICHIGAN 48436

RECEIVED

JUN 04-2014

May 29, 2014

To Whom This May Concern:

RUTH JOHNSON SECRETARY OF STATE

I am writing in response to a complaint made by Susan Somers regarding a recall petition that I had in my office of work at the Village of Gaines. Never working on a recall before, I had no clue that it would be considered under the Michigan Campaign Finance Act. I knew the village hall is a public building and campaigning is allowed in it if a candidate requests to come in but as a volunteer in a recall attempt I never knew the same rules apply. I do apologize for that. The petition sat on my desk for a day and a half and when someone mentioned that it may not be wise I took it out. As far as the allegations from Ms. Somers stating the public resources to make a contribution or expenditure, I do not see how she can ascertain a monetary value on the situation. As far as her evidence of A and B, these are not notarized statements and should not be held accountable. As I said earlier I do apologize for the petition being in my office not knowing other factors were involved of the Campaign Finance Act. I do know now and it will never happen again. If there is any other questions you have of me feel free to contact me either at the address above or @ the Village of Gaines, PO Box 178, Gaines, Mi 48436. Thank you for your time. I also hope this is reaching your office before the 15 day cutoff. I actually received your letter on May 28, 8 days after the date of the letter. This is being mailed on the May 29, 2014 so just in case I want you to know it was sent back right away.

Luanne Kondel

Clerk, Village of Gaines



STATE OF MICHIGAN RUTH JOHNSON, SECRETARY OF STATE DEPARTMENT OF STATE LANSING

June 24, 2014

Luanne Kondel 10347 Baldwin Gaines, Michigan 48436

Dear Ms. Kondel:

This letter concerns the complaint that was recently filed against you by Susan Somers, which relates to purported violations of the Michigan Campaign Finance Act (MCFA or Act), 1976 PA 388, MCL 169.201 et seq. The Department of State has received a rebuttal statement from the complainant, a copy of which is enclosed with this letter.

Section 15(10) of the MCFA, MCL 169.215(10), requires the Department to determine within 60 business days from the receipt of the rebuttal statement whether there is a reason to believe that a violation of the Act has occurred. Ms. Somers' complaint remains under investigation at this time. At the conclusion of the review, all parties will receive written notice of the outcome of the complaint.

Sincerely,

Lori A. Bourbonais

Bureau of Elections

Michigan Department of State

hori A Boursonais

c: Susan Somers

Susan C. Somers 6331 Seymour Road, Swartz Creek, MI 48473.

BUREAU OF ELECTIONS
MI DEPT OF STATE

Bureau of Elections, Richard H. Austin Building, 1st floor, 430 West Allegan Street, Lansing, MI 48919. 2014 JULY 20 M 9: 26

Thursday, June 12, 2014.

Dear Mr. Bourbonais,

RE: Rebuttal statement of the response from Luanne Kondel regarding complaint filed of alleged violation of the MCFA.

Ms. Kondel has stated that she had a recall petition in her office at the Village of Gaines and further stated that the petition sat on her desk for a day and a half. I believe Ms. Kondel engaged in this activity from late March 2014, up to May 15th 2014 because of the following:

- 1. Please find enclosed a copy of MLive-Flint Journal article. Second paragraph reports that Ms. Kondel stated to the reporter that she has been circulating the petition in the Village of Gaines office since late March. Further into the article, she admits to collecting signatures during business hours and her lunch hours. Second page, line 3, ... "When people come in, I ask if they want to sign it," she said after the May 15 meeting. ... Ms. Kondel refers to her activity in the present tense, indicating that through May 15, is still engaged in "circulating" petitions in the Village of Gaines municipal building.
- 2. In the original complaint filed with your office, statements from Robert Rudolph and Norman Poblette were provided and indicated that on Tuesday April 29, 2014 they both, upon request of Ms. Kondel, signed the recall petition she was circulating within the Village of Gaines municipal building. Ms. Kondel did not refute the truth of these statements, merely requested that they be dismissed as evidence because they were not notarized.

Ms. Kondel stated that she had no knowledge of any possible violation. I believe Ms. Kondel is aware that using any public resource to make a contribution to a political committee or campaign effort is not allowed because of the following:

- 1. Ms. Kondel has held the office of Village of Gaines Clerk for approximately two decades, working closely with elected council members and is a seasoned appointed official.
- 2. Throughout this appointed period, Ms. Kondel has been an election worker, serving most of that appointment as the election chairperson. She has attended ongoing State and County seminars/workshops regarding applicable laws.

In closing, Ms. Kondel states that she cannot see how a monetary value can be ascertained. By its prohibition, the law has ascertained that the use of office space, property and/or other public resources ... as well as providing volunteer personal services ... has monetary value.

Respectfully submitted,

for de

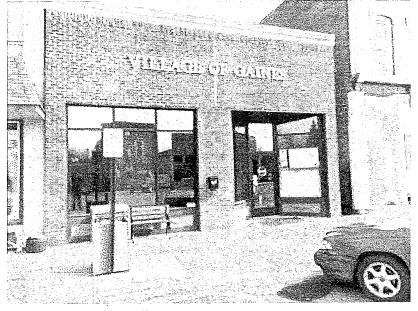
SUSAN C. SOMERS.



State looking into campaign finance violation claims in Gaines Township recall

Eric Dresden | edresden@mlive.com By Eric Dresden | edresden@mlive.com

on May 22, 2014 at 6:00 AM, updated May 22, 2014 at 11:48 AM



The Village of Gaines office.

Eric Dresden | edresden@mlive.com

GAINES, MI – The Michigan Bureau of Elections is investigating whether the clerk for the Village of Gaines violated the state's Campaign Finance Act by seeking recall signatures in the village office.

Since late March, Village Clerk Luanne Kondel said she has been asking residents who visited the village office if they wished to sign a recall petition against Gaines Township Supervisor Chuck Melki.

Township resident Sue Somers, a Melki supporter, complained to the state but Kondel said she is still waiting on official word from the Michigan Bureau of Elections.

Gisgie Gendreau, communications director for the Michigan Department of State, said Kondel will

receive a letter from the state about the allegations soon. From there, Kondel will have 15 business days to respond.

Then, Somers will have 10 business days to file a rebuttal before a 60-day window for an investigation opens.

"As far as penalties, there's really no way to say at this time," Gendreau said in an email.

Kondel, whose position is appointed by the board, said she didn't think it was a violation but doesn't want to do anything to harm the recall petition.

"If it's wrong, it's wrong," she said. "It was my mistake. I'm not going to do anything to jeopardize the recall petition."

· Kondel told MLive-The Flint Journal that she believes she received about five signatures from people coming into the

office, although at least one came during her lunch hour. She couldn't recall how many came during her lunch hour and how many were taken in the office.

"When people come in, I ask if they want to sign it," she said after the May 15 meeting.

Melki said it's wrong to use public facilities to promote or deny an elector, adding he believes it's "Illegal, immoral and unethical."

"It's a miscarriage of justice if they are using that facility for the solicitation either for or against my recall," he said.

Somers alleges that Kondel violated the **Michigan Campaign Finance Act section 169.257**, which says, in part, "A public body or a person acting for a public body shall not use or authorize the use of funds, personnel, office space ... or other public resources to make a contribution or provide volunteer personal services ..."

Somers, who recently **returned a recall petition against Gaines Township Clerk Mike Dowler** which could be on the November ballot, said several people told her that there was solicitation for signatures going on at the village office.

"It's a violation of the tax payers' money, abuse of the position and it shouldn't be going on," she said.

Although Somers openly supports Melki, she said she wants the recall to be done fairly and by the law.

"If they collect signatures ... then they have to do it legally," she said.

Genesee County Clerk John Gleason said he called the Michigan Bureau of Elections after finding out about the allegations. Gleason said he believes that even if Kondel did recall-related activities on her lunch hour soliciting in the office is "very unethical."

"She was sworn in as clerk ... to uphold the constitution of the United States and the State of Michigan," Gleason said. "She should do that."

With signatures being collected against Melki and signatures turned in and a recall could be on the November ballot against Dowler and Treasurer Diane Hyrman, Gleason called the continued arguing between sides a "family feud."

"I wish they would just do their job and quit using taxpayer money for political gain," he said.

During the May 15 meeting, the village councilman James Savage questioned the legality of what was going on and trustees said they would look into it, although nobody was designated to investigate the matter.

Village President Sam Stiff said he didn't know that Kondel was seeking signatures until several days before the May

15 meeting, but added the village of seek the help of the Michigan Municipal League on the matter.

"They've been helpful in the past," he said.

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State of Michigan Ruth Johnson, Secretary of State DEPARTMENT OF STATE Lansing

October 2, 2014

Luanne Kondel 10347 Baldwin Gaines, Michigan 48436

Dear Ms. Kondel:

The Department of State (Department) has concluded its initial investigation of the complaint filed by Susan Somers against you, which alleged that you violated the Michigan Campaign Finance Act (MCFA or Act), 1976 PA 388, MCL 169.201 et seq. This letter concerns the disposition of Ms. Somers' complaint, which was filed May 13, 2014. You filed an answer to the complaint on June 4, 2014, and Ms. Somers filed a rebuttal statement on June 20, 2014.

Ms. Somers alleged that you improperly used public funds to further a recall effort by requesting and allowing people to sign recall petitions in the township office during working hours.

The MCFA prohibits a public body or an individual acting on its behalf from "us[ing] or authoriz[ing] the use of funds, personnel, office space, computer hardware or software, property, stationery, postage, vehicles, equipment, supplies, or other public resources to make a contribution or expenditure." MCL 169.257(1). Expenditure is a term of art which includes "a payment, donation, loan, or promise of payment of money or anything of ascertainable monetary value for goods, materials, services, or facilities in assistance of, or in opposition to the nomination or election of a candidate [.]" MCL 169.206(1). A candidate includes "an officeholder who is the subject of a recall vote." MCL 169.203(1)(d). A knowing violation of section 57 is a misdemeanor offense. MCL 169.257(3).

The Act also requires the Department to "endeavor to correct the violation or prevent a further violation by using informal methods [,]" if it finds that "there may be reason to believe that a violation ... has occurred [.]" MCL 169.215(10). The objective of an informal resolution is "to correct the violation or prevent a further violation [,]" *Id*.

As evidence, Ms. Somers provided two signed statements by signers of the recall petition against Chuck Melki, which state that you invited the signers "into the Village of Gaines municipal building . . . and offered and requested that [they] sign recall petitions for the recall of the Gaines Township Supervisor [.]" Ms. Somers also provided a screen shot from the Village of Gaines Facebook page which indicates the office hours for the Village of Gaines, and a newspaper ad supporting the recall effort.

In your answer you stated that you had not worked on a recall before and that you did not know that it would be covered under the MCFA. You also stated that you "knew the village hall is a public building [,]" but that you did not realize the same rules for candidates would apply to a

Luanne Kondel
October 2, 2014
Page 2

recall attempt. You admitted that the recall petition "sat on [your] desk for a day and half" [,]" but you removed it when someone mentioned that "it may not be wise."

In her rebuttal statement, Ms. Somers provided a copy of a newspaper article which reports that you said you had "been asking residents who visited the village office if they wished to sign a recall petition against Gaines Township Supervisor Chuck Melki."

Because you admit to having the petitions in your office and the Department has received statements from two signers who assert that they signed the petition in your office, the Department concludes that that there may be a reason to believe that a violation of section 57 of the Act has occurred. Upon making this determination the Department is required by law to attempt to resolve the matter informally. MCL 169.215(10).

By October 17, 2014, please provide the Department with the number signatures you gathered in the Village of Gaines office, the amount of time you spent with each signer, and your hourly salary. Also please provide any other actions taken by you, if any, that incurred cost to the village with regard to the recall effort (for example, any copies of petitions that were made on village equipment, etc.). Please list the action, purpose, and amount expended. The Department will use this information to facilitate an informal resolution of Ms. Somers' complaint.

Please be advised that if the Department is unable to resolve the matter through informal methods, the Department must refer the matter to the Attorney General for enforcement of the criminal penalty provided in MCL 169.257(3). MCL 169.215(10)(a).

Sincerely,

Lori A. Bourbonais Bureau of Elections

Michigan Department of State

BUREAU OF ELECTIONS
MI DEPT OF STATE

2014 NOV 21 PN 2: 55

STATE OF MICHIGAN RUTH JOHNSON, SECRETARY OF STATE DEPARTMENT OF STATE LANSING

In the Matter of:

Luanne Kondel 10347 Baldwin Gaines, Michigan 48436

CONCILIATION AGREEMENT

Pursuant MCL §169.215(10) of the Michigan Campaign Finance Act (the Act), MCL §169.201 *et seq.*, the Secretary of State and Luanne Kondel (Respondent) hereby enter into a conciliation agreement with respect to certain acts, omissions, methods, or practices prohibited by the Act.

The Secretary of State alleges that there may be reason to believe that the Respondent violated MCL §169.257(1) by making improper expenditures in the amount of \$14.00 by collecting signatures on a recall petition in the Village of Gaines (Village) office during regular Village office hours.

Therefore, the Respondent, without admitting any issue of law or fact, except as stated herein, hereby voluntarily enters into this conciliation agreement and assures the Secretary of State that she will comply with the Act and the Rules promulgated to implement the Act.

By executing this conciliation agreement, the Respondent (1) certifies that \$14.00 has been reimbursed to the Village of Gaines and (2) has provided a copy of a receipt or other proof of payment to the Department.

The Secretary of State and the Respondent further agree that this agreement is in effect and enforceable for four years from the date it is signed by the Secretary of State or her duly authorized representative.

The Secretary of State and the Respondent further agree that this agreement, unless violated, shall constitute a complete bar to any further action by the Secretary of State with respect to the alleged violation that resulted in the execution of this agreement.

The Secretary of State and the Respondent further agree that the complaint and investigation that resulted in this agreement are disposed of and will not be the basis for further proceedings, except pursuant to this agreement.

The Secretary of State and the Respondent further agree that this agreement will not prevent the Secretary of State from taking action for violations of this agreement.

The Secretary of State and the Respondent further agree that the Respondent's performance under this agreement shall be given due consideration in any subsequent proceedings.

The Secretary of State and the Respondent further agree that this agreement, when signed, shall become a part of the permanent public records of the Department of State.

Luanne Kondel Conciliation Agreement Page 3

The Secretary of State and the Respondent finally agree that the signatories below are authorized to enter into and bind the parties to this agreement, and have done so by signing this agreement on the date below.

RUTH JOHNSON SECRETARY OF STATE

RESPONDENT

Christopher M. Thomas, Director

Bureau of Elections

Luanne Konuei

Date: 11-25-14

Date: 11/10/14