



# Michigan Department of State Campaign Finance and Financial Disclosure Complaint Form

This complaint form may be used to file a complaint alleging that someone violated the [Michigan Campaign Finance Act](#) (MCFA), the [Candidate for Office Financial Disclosure Act](#), or the [Public Officers Financial Disclosure Act](#) (financial disclosure acts). Electronic submission of the form to [BOERegulatory@michigan.gov](mailto:BOERegulatory@michigan.gov) is strongly recommended. For instructions on how to complete this form, see the [Campaign Finance and Financial Disclosure Complaint Guidebook](#) document. All spaces are required unless otherwise indicated.

## Section 1. Complainant

Your name		Daytime telephone number
Lisa Rousseau		989-668-1336
Mailing address		
114 E Front St		
City	State	Zip
Ovid	MI	48866
Email (recommended)		
ChiefRousseau@ovidmi.org		

## Section 2. Alleged Violator (Respondent)

Name		
Bobby Byles - A Fire fighter at the Ovid Middlebury Fire Department		
Mailing address		
1045 Baese Ct. (Ovid Middlebury Fire Dept)		
City	State	Zip
Ovid	MI	48866
Email (recommended)		
ovid.fire@yahoo.com		
Committee ID (optional)		

*Please include email addresses to expedite processing time and mitigate mail delays.*

## Section 3. Allegations *(use additional sheets if more space is needed)*

I allege a violation of the following:

- ☒ MCFA
- ☐ Public officer disclosure
- ☐ Candidate disclosure

Identify the section(s) of the MCFA or relevant financial disclosure act section(s) alleged to be violated and explain how the section(s) were violated:

There are two issues:

1) Bobby Byles is running for Ovid Twp. Trustee. He is wearing his Fire Gear in the photo.

169.257 Contributions, expenditures, or volunteer personal services; prohibitions; communication referencing local ballot questions; violation as misdemeanor; penalty.

Sec. 57. (1) A public body or a person acting for a public body shall not use or authorize 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 or provide volunteer personal services that are excluded from the definition of contribution under section 4(3)(a).

(d) and (g) 2. (The two other candidates do not have access to, nor can they wear fire turnout gear)

2) Bobby Byles political sign lacks the proper verbiage.

Sections 1,3 and 4.

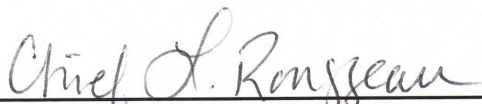
Evidence included with the submission of the complaint that supports the allegations:

EVIDENCE:

I submitted a photo of Byles Political sign.

#### Section 4. Certification *(required)*

I certify that to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, formed after a reasonable inquiry under the circumstances, each factual contention of this complaint is supported by evidence.



Signature of complainant

09/22/2024

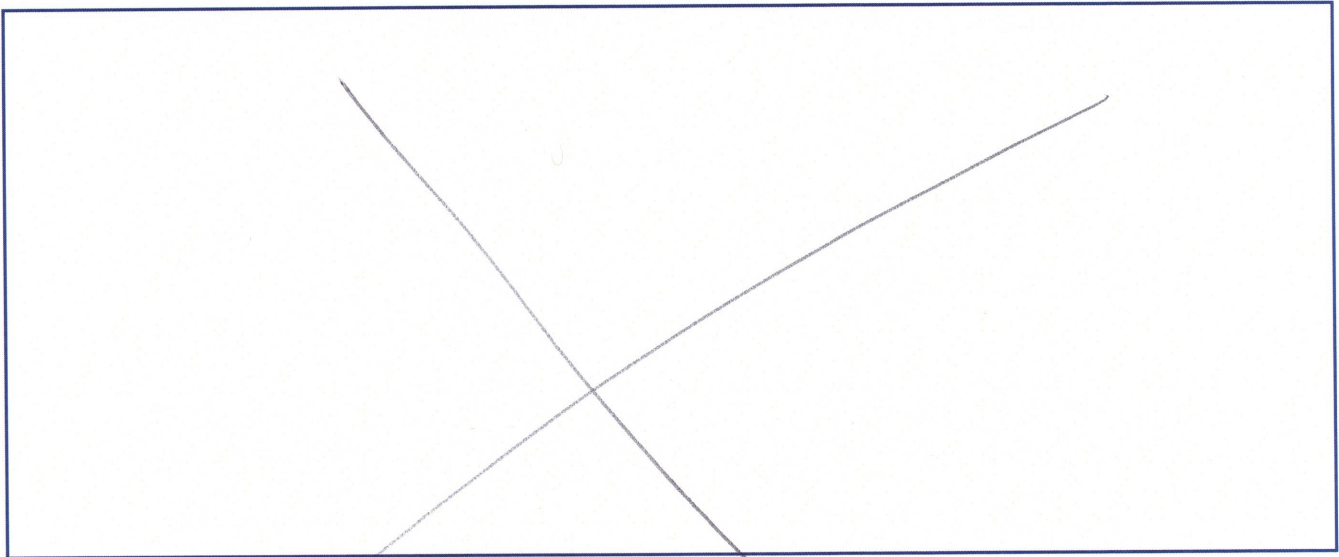
Date



## Section 5. Certification without Evidence *(supplemental to Section 4)*

If, after a reasonable inquiry under the circumstances, you are unable to certify that certain factual contentions are supported by evidence as indicated above, you may make the following certification:

*I certify that to the best of my knowledge, information, or belief, there are grounds to conclude that the following specifically identified factual contentions are likely to be supported by evidence after a reasonable opportunity for further inquiry. Those specific contentions are:*



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Complainant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Section 15(8) of the MCFA provides that a person who files a complaint with a false certification is responsible for a civil violation of the MCFA. The person may be required to pay a civil fine of up to \$1,000 and some, or all, of the expenses incurred by the Michigan Department of State and the alleged violator as a direct result of the filing of the complaint. MCL 169.215(16).

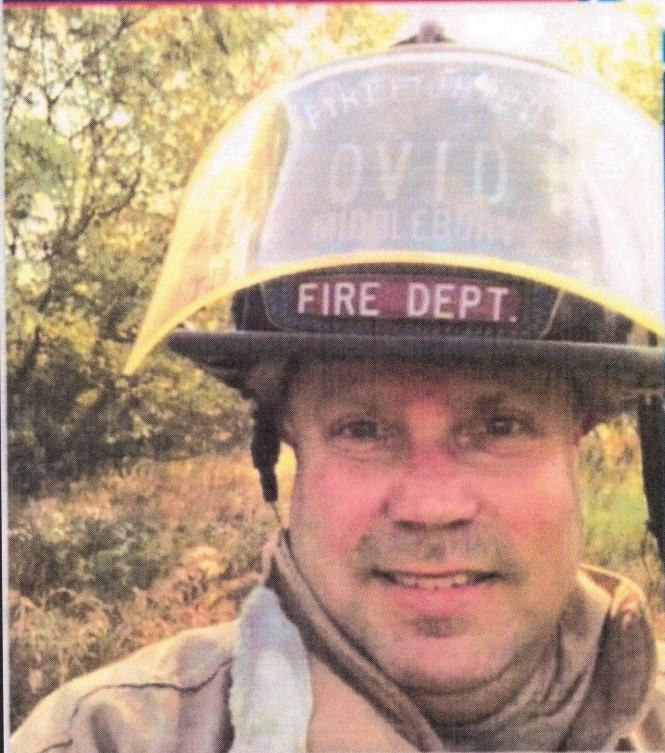
The financial disclosure acts prohibit a person from filing a complaint with a false certification. MCL 169.313(7); MCL 15.713(7).

## Section 6. Submission

Once completed, submit the complaint form with your evidence to [BOERegulatory@Michigan.gov](mailto:BOERegulatory@Michigan.gov). Alternatively, you may mail or hand deliver the complaint form with your evidence to the address below. The complaint is considered filed upon receipt by the Bureau of Elections.

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





# **ELECT** **Bobby Byles**

**Ovid Twp Trustee**

989-640-5088  
[bobbybrb@yahoo.com](mailto:bobbybrb@yahoo.com)

Republican



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
JOCELYN BENSON, SECRETARY OF STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
LANSING

September 25, 2024

Bobby Byles  
1045 Baese Ct.  
Ovid, MI 48866

Re: *Rousseau v. Byles*  
Campaign Finance Complaint No. 24-204

Dear Bobby Byles:

The Department of State (Department) has received a formal complaint filed against you by Lisa Rousseau alleging that you violated the Michigan Campaign Finance Act (MCFA or Act). Specifically, the complaint alleges that you used public resources for your campaign and did not include the required statement on your campaign materials. A copy of the complaint is included with this notice.

In Michigan, it is unlawful for a public body or an individual acting on its behalf to use or authorize the use of equipment, supplies, personnel, funds, or other public resources to make a contribution or expenditure. MCL 169.257(1). The words “contribution” and “expenditure” are terms of art that are generally defined to include a payment or transfer of anything of ascertainable monetary value made for the purpose of influencing the election of or made in assistance of a candidate. MCL 169.204(1), 169.206(1). An individual who knowingly violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 1 year or a fine of not more than \$1,000.00, or both. MCL 169.257(4).

The MCFA and corresponding administrative rules require a person who produces printed material that relates to an election include the phrase “Paid for by [name and address of the person who paid for the item].” MCL 169.247(1), R 169.36(2). A knowing violation constitutes a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000.00, imprisonment for up to 93 days, or both. MCL 169.247(6).

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. 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.* An explanation of the process is included in the Department's campaign finance complaint [guidebook](#).

**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. Materials may be emailed to [BOERegulatory@michigan.gov](mailto:BOERegulatory@michigan.gov) or mailed to the Department of State, Bureau of Elections, Richard H. Austin Building, 1<sup>st</sup> 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 answer will be provided to Lisa Rousseau, who will have an opportunity to submit a rebuttal statement to the Department. After reviewing 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.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, you may contact the Regulatory Section of the Bureau of Elections at [BOERegulatory@Michigan.gov](mailto:BOERegulatory@Michigan.gov).

Sincerely,

Regulatory Section  
Bureau of Elections  
Michigan Department of State

Enclosure  
c: Lisa Rousseau



**From:** Bobby Byles <bobbybrb@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 7, 2024 1:34 PM  
**To:** MDOS-BOERegulatory  
**Subject:** Rousseau v. Byles Complaint No. 24-204

CAUTION: This is an External email. Please send suspicious emails to [abuse@michigan.gov](mailto:abuse@michigan.gov)

To whom it may concern, please be advised this is a written response regarding allegedly violating the Michigan Campaign Finance Act, stating that I used public resources for my campaign, and did not include required statement on my campaign sign. Please be advised I did not know the sign was in violation and did not knowingly and willingly produce the sign in any negligent or facetious way knowing that it was in violation. The sign was displayed in front of my personal residence at 5353 E. M 21 St. John's MI 48879 for no other reason than to promote myself for office of Ovid Township Trustee. The sign has been taken down and will be disposed of.



This is the bottom of the sign in question, however, did lack proper wording as committee to elect, etc. which was not visible in certain Facebook posts.

Thank You  
Bobby Byles

5353 E. M 21 St. John's MI 48879  
989-640-5088  
[bobbybrb@yahoo.com](mailto:bobbybrb@yahoo.com)





STATE OF MICHIGAN  
JOCELYN BENSON, SECRETARY OF STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
LANSING

October 18, 2024

Lisa Rousseau  
114 East Front Street  
Ovid, MI 48866

Re: *Rousseau v. Byles*  
Campaign Finance Complaint No. 24-204

Dear Lisa Rousseau:

The Department of State received a response from Bobby Byles to the complaint you filed against them alleging a violation of the Michigan Campaign Finance Act, 1976 P.A. 388, MCL 169.201 *et seq.* A copy of the response is provided with this letter.

You may file a rebuttal statement after reviewing the enclosed response. If you elect to file a rebuttal statement, you are required to do so within 10 business days of the date of this letter. The rebuttal statement may be emailed to [BOERegulatory@Michigan.gov](mailto:BOERegulatory@Michigan.gov) or mailed to the Department of State, Bureau of Elections, Richard H. Austin Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, 430 West Allegan Street, Lansing, Michigan 48918.

Sincerely,

Regulatory Division  
Bureau of Elections  
Michigan Department of State

Attachment  
c: Bobby Byles



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
JOCELYN BENSON, SECRETARY OF STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
LANSING

November 25, 2024

Bobby Byles  
1045 Baese Court  
Ovid, MI 48866

Re: *Rousseau v. Byles*  
Campaign Finance Complaint No. 24-204

Dear Bobby Byles:

The Department of State (Department) has finished investigating the campaign finance complaint filed against you by Lisa Rousseau alleging that you violated the Michigan Campaign Finance Act (MCFA or Act). This letter concerns the disposition of that complaint.

The complaint alleged that you used public resources for your campaign and did not include the required statement on your campaign materials.

You responded to the complaint. In your response, you claimed you were unaware of the identification statement requirement and have since removed the sign. You did not address the allegation that you improperly used public resources.

Lisa Rousseau did not provide a rebuttal statement.

In Michigan, it is unlawful for a public body or an individual acting on its behalf to use or authorize the use of equipment, supplies, personnel, funds, or other public resources to make a contribution or expenditure. MCL 169.257(1). The words "contribution" and "expenditure" are terms of art that are generally defined to include a payment or transfer of anything of ascertainable monetary value made for the purpose of influencing the election of or made in assistance of a candidate. MCL 169.204(1), 169.206(1). An individual who knowingly violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 1 year or a fine of not more than \$1,000.00, or both. MCL 169.257(4).

The MCFA and corresponding administrative rules require a person who produces printed material that relates to an election include the phrase "Paid for by [name and address of the person who paid for the item]." MCL 169.247(1), R 169.36(2). A knowing violation constitutes a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000.00, imprisonment for up to 93 days, or both. MCL 169.247(6).

With regards to the Section 47 complaint, the Department has reviewed the evidence submitted in this matter and finds that sufficient evidence has been presented to support a finding of a potential violation of the MCFA. Upon review, the evidence submitted supports the conclusion

that a potential violation of the Act has occurred. From the outset, the Department must consider whether the materials fall within the ambit of the MCFA. Because the materials explicitly advocate for the election or defeat of a candidate, or for the passage or defeat of a ballot proposal, the materials contain express advocacy as defined by the Act. MCL 169.206(2)(j). As explained above, such materials must contain a “paid for by” statement listing the name and address of the committee purchasing the materials. However, the evidence shows that the materials at issue here omit part or all of that required statement. That absence supports the conclusion that a potential violation of the MCFA has occurred.

After reaching this conclusion, the Act 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.*

Given this, the Department concludes that a formal warning is a sufficient resolution to the complaint and is hereby advising you that MCL 169.247(1) and R 169.36(2) require you to print a complete and accurate identification statement on all campaign materials, consisting of the phrase “paid for by” followed by the full name and address of your committee.

Note that all printed materials referencing you or your candidacy produced in the future must include this identification statement. Please be advised that this notice has served to remind you of your obligation under the Act to identify your printed matter and may be used in future proceedings as evidence that tends to establish a knowing violation of the Act. A knowing violation is a misdemeanor offense and may merit referral to the Attorney General for enforcement action. MCL 169.247(6), 215(10).

In reference to the Section 57 complaint, the Department has reviewed the evidence submitted in this matter and finds that insufficient evidence has been presented to support a finding of a potential violation of the MCFA. The evidence presented does not indicate that the uniform you are photographed wearing was paid for by a public body, thus providing no evidence that it is a public resource. Because this violation of the MCFA alleged in the complaint has not been substantiated by sufficient evidence, the Department dismisses the complaint and will take no further enforcement action.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, you may contact me at [BOERegulatory@Michigan.gov](mailto:BOERegulatory@Michigan.gov).

Sincerely,



James Biehl, Regulatory Attorney  
Regulatory Division  
Bureau of Elections  
Michigan Department of State

c: Lisa Rousseau