



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

May 24, 2016

Mr. Troy M. Cumings
Warner Norcross & Judd
One Michigan Avenue Building
120 North Washington Avenue, Suite 410
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Dear Mr. Cumings:

The Department of State (Department) has completed its investigation of the complaint filed against Representative Griffin by Brandon Dillon, which alleged a violation of the Michigan Campaign Finance Act (MCFA or Act), 1976 PA 388, MCL 169.201 *et seq.* This letter concerns the disposition of Mr. Dillon's complaint.

The MCFA and corresponding administrative rules require the Department to ascertain whether there may be "reason to believe that a violation of this act has occurred." MCL 169.215(10), R 169.55(3). If the Department finds that there may be "reason to believe that a violation of this act has occurred[.]" the Department is required by law to "endeavor to correct the violation or prevent a further violation by using informal methods." *Id.*

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).

Mr. Dillon filed his complaint on September 23, 2016, and Rep. Griffin filed a written response dated January 24, 2017. The allegations of the complaint were that Rep. Griffin improperly used public funds by using her Van Buren County Commission email account to expressly advocate for her nomination and election, to further the nomination or election of other candidates, and to solicit campaign contributions.

In her response, Rep. Griffin pointed to five specific emails where she admitted that potential violations of MCL 169.257 may have occurred. First, two of these emails involved "testing the waters" discussions where Rep. Griffin was seeking advice on becoming and announcing as a candidate. Two emails discussed upcoming fundraisers and RSVPs for fundraisers, and the last email discussed volunteering for Rep. Griffin's campaign. Rep. Griffin stated that use of the county email was inadvertent and were sent from her privately-owned iPhone which had access to both emails. She further indicated that she has since put safeguards in place to prevent this from occurring again.



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

January 25, 2017

Brandon Dillon
606 Townsend Street
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Dear Mr. Dillon:

The Department of State received a response to the complaint you filed against Beth Griffin, 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 within 10 business days 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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori A. Bourbonais".

Lori A. Bourbonais
Bureau of Elections
Michigan Department of State

c: Troy Cumings

Bourbonais, Lori (MDOS)

From: Bourbonais, Lori (MDOS)
Sent: Thursday, November 03, 2016 10:22 AM
To: Cumings, Troy (TCumings@wnj.com)
Subject: Dillon v Griffin Campaign Finance Complaint
Attachments: Dillon v Griffin Supplemental Evidence.pdf

Troy,

I have attached supplemental evidence that we have received regarding the campaign finance complaint filed against Beth Griffin by Brandon Dillon. I left you a voicemail regarding this yesterday. Please give me a call when you have a minute -- 517-241-0395.

Thank you,
Lori

Bourbonais, Lori (MDOS)

From: Paul Kanan <pkanan@michigandems.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 02, 2016 2:44 PM
To: Bourbonais, Lori (MDOS)
Subject: Fwd: Additional Docs for MDP/Beth Griffin Complaint
Attachments: griffin emails new.pdf

Hi Lori,

Thanks for your help with this. Attached are the additional documents we'd like to include in the Beth Griffin complaint. These are emails from a personal email acknowledging that she does, indeed, understand she is violating campaign finance law by using her government email for campaign purposes.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,
Paul

--

Paul Kanan
Communications Director/Press Secretary
Michigan Democratic Party
606 Townsend St.
Lansing, MI 48933
517.371.5410
pkanan@michigandems.com



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Exhibit 25

From: mattawanmom@yahoo.com
Subject: Re: dec. event mailing list, etc. discussion
Date: November 4, 2015 at 6:21:55 PM EST
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Reply-To: mattawanmom@yahoo.com

I have read this twice. I need to read it again. Initial comments:

1. My lists have few emails. I need to work on this. I have a raw exported file of yahoo contacts that need put into Gmail, too. In order to email any group, it will require a lot of work on my part, as I do not have my yahoo contacts organized into functional group conducive to what you want to do right now. Plus, several emails are "county" emails, and I shouldn't use those because it's not kosher. Don't let this slow anyone down. It's an FYI. I think we should not email anyone right now, it will slow us down.
2. I understand to get the mailing list finalized first. I can do this, and understand the "pulling out of names I want to self write on. I have no idea what is comfortable, or anything like that. I'm thinking I want to write on all of them. I'll try that.
3. I will need to talk to you [REDACTED], if you want me to start messing with files, I simply don't have the ability to move files around, or add a column, or whatnot. Some of these instructions I don't understand how to do because of this limitation.

Question: How do I find an address for a person, free? Online? I have a GOP Datacenter login and password, but haven't ever been comfortable with it as atool. This should be a quick answer, right?

Question: for the invite: I am thinking we only mail the invite to mattawan/pawpaw/Decatur. Will it be bad to not send to the SH people? Don't let this question bog you down guys, just looking for a 2 minute advice thing?

Warm regards,
Beth Griffin
269-491-7716 cell
269-668-5915 home

----- Forwarded message -----
From: Beth Griffin <bgriffin.vbc@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Dec 4, 2015 at 10:01 PM
Subject: Re: vbco.org address
To: [REDACTED]

Exhibit 27

Second thought: will ask her for personal email. If shes a Dem she could be testing me.

On Fri, Dec 4, 2015 at 7:48 AM Beth Griffin <bgriffin.vbc@gmail.com> wrote:
If she requested, we have permission. As long as I am not sending without permission, I am fine. Let's keep it.

On Thu, Dec 3, 2015 at 11:03 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:
S Roehms signed up for your email list, and I know you don't want to email to those addresses so could tell her in person or if you know a private email so she can/we can update it in our records.

The email is roehms@vbco.org

Thanks.

--
Beth Griffin
269-491-7716



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

January 25, 2017

Brandon Dillon
606 Townsend Street
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Dear Mr. Dillon:

The Department of State received a response to the complaint you filed against Beth Griffin, 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 within 10 business days 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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori A. Bourbonais".

Lori A. Bourbonais
Bureau of Elections
Michigan Department of State

c: Troy Cumings

Bourbonais, Lori (MDOS)

From: Cumings, Troy <TCumings@wnj.com>
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2016 4:58 PM
To: Bourbonais, Lori (MDOS)
Subject: Dillon v. Griffin
Attachments: 15175973_1 Answer to Griffin complaint-c.DOCX

Lori,

Attached is Beth Griffin's answer to Mr. Dillon's complaint. Please let me know if you have any questions.



Troy M. Cumings

Warner Norcross & Judd LLP

One Michigan Avenue Building | 120 North Washington Avenue, Suite 410 | Lansing, MI 48933-1617

p 517.679.7411 | f 517.679.7405

tcumings@wnj.com | [Profile](#) | [V-Card](#)

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November 21, 2016

Ms. Lori A. Bourbonais
Bureau of Elections
Michigan Dept. of State
Richard H. Austin Bldg., 1st Floor
430 West Allegan Street
Lansing, Michigan 48918

Re: **Dillon v. Griffin**

Dear Ms. Bourbonais:

This letter serves as Beth Griffin's answer to the complaint that Brandon Dillon filed on September 22, 2016. On October 7, you granted an extension of time to file this answer to November 14. Then on November 3, you informed me that Mr. Dillon had submitted supplemental evidence. Based on that submittal, on November 14 you granted a further extension of time to file this answer to November 21.

Background

We understand that Mr. Dillon through his associates submitted a FOIA request to Van Buren County in an attempt to obtain Ms. Griffin's e-mail messages from her public account for the past three years. Mr. Dillon then presumably reviewed all the e-mails, compiled the messages he felt were "political" in nature, and filed a complaint based on those e-mails. As to the substance of the complaint, the factual background contains so many inaccuracies that it is largely unintelligible. Mr. Dillon only provides an explanation of exhibits 2-9. His explanations contain entirely incorrect information for exhibits 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. And he completely fails to explain or even cite exhibits 10-24. In the end, Mr. Dillon appears to rely only on his general claims in paragraphs 18-21 of his complaint without providing any intelligible argument as to how he feels each of his exhibits or supplemental evidence demonstrates a violation of Section 57 of the Michigan Campaign Finance Act (the "Act").

The balance of this letter will address each of Mr. Dillon's 24 exhibits and supplemental evidence. In short, the vast majority of Mr. Dillon's evidence should not amount to a violation of Section 57 of the Act. With that said, Ms. Griffin did send messages regarding her candidacy and campaign using her public e-mail account on a few isolated occasions over the past three years. But Ms. Griffin's use of the county e-mail system for these messages did not involve the use of public resources while Ms. Griffin was working as a county commissioner or while she was on county property, were not sent from county-owned device, and did not amount to an ascertainable monetary value of public resources. Further, this letter will explain that

Ms. Griffin has taken measures to ensure this type of inadvertent mistake does not occur again. Consequently, we request that the Department treat this matter the same as similar situations in the past by issuing a warning letter and using that letter as evidence in any future proceedings of a knowing violation of the Act.

Analysis

Mr. Dillon did present five e-mail messages that may be violations of Section 57 spanning approximately one year. In Exhibit 2, Ms. Griffin responded to a local township official regarding an upcoming township board meeting and in her response references an upcoming fundraiser for her campaign. In Exhibit 3, one of her colleagues sent her a message about a problem she was having with the online RSVP process for one of Ms. Griffin's upcoming campaign fundraisers. Ms. Griffin responded simply acknowledging her colleague's RSVP. In Exhibit 10, Ms. Griffin forwarded a state Republican party mass e-mail message to a person suggesting that the person forward the message to the local party and encourage people to get involved, including in her campaign. Finally, Exhibits 7 and 9, involve "testing the waters" discussions whereby Ms. Griffin seeks advice on becoming and announcing as a candidate for the state House.

The use of Ms. Griffin's county e-mail account for each of these five e-mail messages, however, was inadvertent. Ms. Griffin sent all of the e-mails from her privately-owned iPhone (see "on my iPhone" message at the end of each message). That iPhone did have access to both her private e-mail account and her county e-mail account. For each of these messages, Ms. Griffin mistakenly sent the messages on her county e-mail account. Upon realizing that these oversights had occurred, Ms. Griffin put safeguards in place to prevent this from happening again: she removed access to her county e-mail account from her iPhone. Further, as a state representative Ms. Griffin will not mix e-mail accounts on one cell phone. Rather, she will have one phone for political business and then access her state e-mail account using another device.

In addition, as a county commissioner, Ms. Griffin did not have a county office nor any specific office hours. So she did not use any further public resources (such as county time, county offices, or a county-owned computer or device) in sending the messages. The resources were limited to only the use of the county e-mail account. The Department has stated previously in a similar context that "[t]he cost to the county for using the e-mail system was too minimal to calculate."

Consequently, this situation is unlike the facts in the Stobie matter that Mr. Dillon raises. In the Stobie matter, the candidate was a public employee who sent messages under circumstances whereby the county treasurer could ascertain additional public resources that were expended—presumably salary and fringe benefits for the time that the employee sent the messages during office hours or in the office. This situation is more akin to *Brewer v. Krueger* (February 26, 2014) and *Schuette* self-report (December 4, 2015) whereby there was no ascertainable monetary value of public resources used.

In addition to the five messages discussed above, Mr. Dillon has raised 22 other messages that he apparently feels violate Section 57. Upon a review of these 22 messages, we do not believe they should constitute a violation of Section 57. As the Department has previously reasoned when reviewing e-mail messages under Section 57 of the Act, when the Department “has determined that [the message] does not contain words of express advocacy”, “the use of a public e-mail account [] does not give rise to an expenditure.” *See Jones v. Foster* (November 19, 2014). Below are brief descriptions for each of the 22 exhibits:

- **Exhibit 4**

This exhibit involves an initial message from the Lt. Governor’s reelection campaign regarding an upcoming Lincoln Day event in 2014. Ms. Griffin simply responded with the information. The exchange did not involve Ms. Griffin’s campaign.

- **Exhibit 5**

This exhibit involves an exchange between Ms. Griffin and a colleague at the county regarding whether Ms. Griffin will continue to serve as vice chair. Ms. Griffin does mention attending a meeting as a candidate for state representative. But it was a factual statement and not express advocacy.

- **Exhibit 6**

This exhibit includes a message from Ms. Griffin to another person referencing a previous conversation about the open state house seat. Ms. Griffin sent this message before she became a candidate. The message does not mention that she is or wants to run for the seat and otherwise does not contain any express advocacy.

- **Exhibit 8**

This exhibit contains a string whereby another person began asking Ms. Griffin for contact information related to a local Republican party official. Ms. Griffin simply responded with the contact information. In her response, she mentions the possibility of running for the House seat, but does not confirm either way let alone expressly advocate.

- **Exhibit 11**

This exhibit contains an e-mail exchange regarding Ms. Griffin’s appointment to the Michigan Board of Chiropractic. It does not involve any express advocacy regarding Ms. Griffin’s candidacy. Rather, any mention of her candidacy is in relation to how she should describe it in her application materials for the board.

- **Exhibits 12, 13, 14, and 15**

These exhibits contain a string among a women's group from 2013. One of the women in the group mentioned that she announced to run for the House. Various women in the string offered support. Ms. Griffin responded on her iPhone that she would be willing to help, offered a suggestion on a platform for the candidate, offered advice on a compliance issue, and offered congratulations. The string had nothing to do with Ms. Griffin's candidacy and, in fact, occurred more than two years before Ms. Griffin became a candidate for state House.

- **Exhibit 16**

This exhibit contains an exchange regarding Ms. Griffin's request for an official from an electric utility to speak to the Van Buren County Republican women's club. The exchange occurred in 2014 and does not involve any express advocacy.

- **Exhibit 17**

This exhibit contains an initial message from a House candidate in 2014. Ms. Griffin responded with gratitude to the candidate for running. The exchange did not involve Ms. Griffin's candidacy and, in fact, occurred more than a year before Ms. Griffin became a candidate.

- **Exhibit 18**

This exhibit contains an exchange between Ms. Griffin and a township clerk. In the exchange, the township clerk attaches voter lists for the township. Ms. Griffin responds with a question. The exchange does not elaborate further. There is no express advocacy involved. And the exchange occurred in 2014.

- **Exhibit 19**

This exhibit contains a string whereby one of Ms. Griffin's county colleagues forwards her a campaign mass e-mail message from Ms. Griffin's opponent in her state House race. Ms. Griffin simply responds by saying thanks to her colleague. We understand that Ms. Griffin subsequently asked this person to cease sending these messages to her county e-mail account.

- **Exhibit 20**

This exhibit contains a message forwarding a letter the editor criticizing the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners. Ms. Griffin is one of the recipients. Ms. Griffin responded by questioning the facts in the letter and mentioning that they are awaiting additional information. The exchange does contain any express advocacy and occurred in 2013.

- **Exhibit 21**

This exhibit contains a string whereby one of Ms. Griffin's county colleagues forwards her a campaign mass e-mail message from Ms. Griffin's opponent in her state House race. Ms. Griffin forwards the message to one individual on her iPhone but does not otherwise respond. We understand that Ms. Griffin subsequently asked this person to cease sending these messages to her county e-mail account.

- **Exhibit 22**

This exhibit contains a string whereby one of Ms. Griffin's county colleagues forwards her a campaign mass e-mail message from Ms. Griffin's opponent in her state House race. Ms. Griffin simply responds by saying thanks to her colleague. We understand that Ms. Griffin subsequently asked this person to cease sending these messages to her county e-mail account.

- **Exhibit 23**

This exhibit contains a string whereby one of Ms. Griffin's county colleagues forwards her a campaign mass e-mail message from Ms. Griffin's opponent in her state House race. Ms. Griffin forwards the message to one individual on her iPhone but does not otherwise respond. We understand that Ms. Griffin subsequently asked this person to cease sending these messages to her county e-mail account.

- **Exhibit 24**

This exhibit contains an invite to attend a Van Buren County Republican Women meeting. Ms. Griffin simply responded that she'd be there. This is a simple scheduling message should not be construed as express advocacy.

- **Supplemental Evidence, Exhibits 25-27**

The supplemental evidence that Mr. Dillon submitted included three e-mails that Ms. Griffin sent from her personal e-mail accounts. They do not implicate any violation of Section 57 of the Act. And Mr. Dillon does not provide any analysis or discussion as to the purpose of this additional "evidence."

Conclusion

As stated above, Ms. Griffin did inadvertently send messages from her county e-mail account that may have violated Section 57 of the Act. For the five messages analyzed above, based on past Department precedent there was not an ascertainable monetary value of public resources involved and an appropriate resolution is a warning letter.

For the 22 other messages that Mr. Dillon raises, we do not believe they are violations of Section 57 of the Act. Regardless, even if the Department did consider some of those messages to be violations of Section 57 of the Act, we believe that the same analysis applies: the occurrence was inadvertent, there is not an ascertainable monetary value of public resources involved, and Ms. Griffin has taken steps to ensure these situations do not occur in the future.

Ms. Griffin takes her ethical duties as a public official very seriously. She desires to work cooperatively with the Department to resolve this matter amicably. And she is committed to ensuring that the changes she has made to her operations will continue to avoid any inadvertent issues with Section 57 of the Act moving forward. Please contact me if you have any questions. I look forward to working with you to resolve this matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Troy M. Cumings', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Troy M. Cumings

Bourbonais, Lori (MDOS)

From: Bourbonais, Lori (MDOS)
Sent: Friday, October 07, 2016 1:32 PM
To: 'Cumings, Troy'
Subject: RE: Complaint against Beth Griffin

Troy,

The Department acknowledges your request for an extension of time to file an answer to the campaign finance complaint filed by Brandon Dillon against Beth Griffin. The Department understands that you were recently retained by Ms. Griffin and that you will be out of the country for two weeks. The Department finds that there is good cause to grant a 15-business day extension pursuant to MCL 169.215(5). According to my calculation the answer to complaint is now due November 14, 2016.

Sincerely,

Lori A. Bourbonais
Bureau of Elections
Michigan Department of State

From: Cumings, Troy [<mailto:TCumings@wnj.com>]
Sent: Friday, October 07, 2016 1:13 PM
To: Bourbonais, Lori (MDOS)
Subject: Complaint against Beth Griffin

Lori,

I was recently retained by Beth Griffin to assist with responding to the complaint that Brandon Dillon filed on September 22, 2016. Unfortunately, I will be out of the country for two weeks. Consequently, I am requesting an additional 15 business days to respond under MCL 169.215(5). Your notice of the complaint was mailed on September 30, 2016. Therefore, the additional 15 business days would extend the response deadline to November 10, 2016.

I appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to working with you to resolve this matter.



Troy M. Cumings

Warner Norcross & Judd LLP

One Michigan Avenue Building | 120 North Washington Avenue, Suite 410 | Lansing, MI 48933-1617

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

September 30, 2016

Beth Griffin
P.O. Box 29
Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

Dear Ms. Griffin:

The Department of State (Department) received a formal complaint filed by Brandon Dillon 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 169.1 *et seq.* A copy of the complaint and supporting documentation is 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, computer hardware or software, property, stationary, postage, 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(4).

Mr. Dillon alleges that you improperly used public funds by using your Van Buren County Commission email account to expressly advocate for your nomination and election, to further the nomination or election of other Michigan House candidates, and to solicit campaign contributions.

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 Mr. Dillon, 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

Campaign Finance Complaint Form
Michigan Department of State

2016 SEP 23 AM 9:26

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.*). All information on the form must be provided along with an original signature and evidence. **Please print or type all information.**

I allege that the MCFA was violated as follows:

Section 1. Complainant		
Your Name Brandon Dillon		Daytime Telephone Number 517-371-5410
Mailing Address 606 Townsend St.		
City Lansing	State MI	Zip 48933

Section 2. Alleged Violator		
Name Beth Griffin		
Mailing Address PO Box 29		
City Paw Paw	State MI	Zip 49079

Section 3. Alleged Violations (Use additional sheet if more space is needed.)
--

Section(s) of the MCFA violated:

57

Explain how those sections were violated:

See attached.

Evidence that supports those allegations (attach copies of pertinent documents and other information):

See attached.

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.

X


Signature of Complainant

9-22-2016

Date

Section 5. Certification without Evidence (Supplemental to Section 4)

Section 15(6) of the MCFA (MCL 169.215) requires that the signed certification found in section 4 of this form be included in every complaint. However, if, after a reasonable inquiry under the circumstances, you are unable to certify that certain factual contentions are supported by evidence, you may also 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:

X

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 \$1,000.00 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.

Mail or deliver the completed complaint form with an original signature and evidence to the following address:

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

Complaint

Complainant, *Brandon Dillon*, declares to the Secretary of State the following:

Jurisdiction and Legal Background

1. The Van Buren County Commission is a "public body" as defined under the Michigan Campaign Finance Act. MCL 169.211(7).
2. Beth Griffin is, and was at all relevant time periods, a Van Buren County Commissioner. Ms. Griffin's official Van Buren County governmental email address is griffinb@vbco.org, as evidenced on the County website at <http://www.vbco.org/pages9845940.asp>.
3. The Michigan Campaign Finance Act (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).
4. Expenditure is a broadly-defined term under the MCFA and 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).
5. The MCFA applies to the solicitation and acceptance of contributions because such activities are deemed to further the nomination, election, or defeat of a candidate.
6. An expenditure made to gauge support for an individual's candidacy or to solicit advice regarding a possible candidacy is in violation of section 57 of the MCFA if public resources are used. See Tom Stobie letter from SOS dated October 30, 2014, Exhibit 1.

Factual Background

7. Ms. Griffin is a candidate running for office in the 66th District, Michigan House of Representatives.
8. On January 6, 2016, Ms. Griffin used her publicly provided, governmental email account to reach out to an individual she met at a meeting in her capacity as "a candidate for State Rep" to solicit contact about her campaign. Exhibit Number 2.
9. On February 7, 2016, Ms. Griffin used her governmental email account to accept RSVPs to her fundraising event. Exhibit Number 3.
10. On February 16, 2016, Ms. Griffin used her governmental email account to solicit attendance at her fundraiser at Café Julia in South Haven, Michigan. In this email, Ms. Griffin states, "I hope you can come to my Feb 20 fundraiser at Café Julia in South Haven, from 6-8 pm." Exhibit Number 4.
11. On May 18, 2016, Ms. Griffin used her governmental account to forward and promote a Michigan Republican Party event that expressly advocated for the election of Republican candidates. Specifically, the event was designed for "helping get Republicans elected" and it focused on "State House seats," thus directly benefitting Ms. Griffin's election bid. Exhibit Number 5.

12. Ms. Griffin sent a number of emails from her County provided email account to a number of individuals asking and informing them that she was exploring and gauging support for a run for state representative. Exhibit Number 6.
13. In one email, Ms. Griffin stated, "I'd love to come talk to you about the 2016 House race." Exhibit Number 7.
14. In another email, Ms. Griffin uses her County email to solicit a discussion and seek advice about her run for the House of Representatives. "About continuing our discussion about the 2016 open House race, would this Thurs evening, or next Mon or Tues evening work? Maybe just for 30 mins, to capture you and Judy's advice/thoughts...." Exhibit Number 8.
15. In yet another email, Ms. Griffin discusses getting her campaign up and moving. In the email, she stated she "will solicit Aric, Tonya's, and Middaugh's thoughts about timing for announcing...." Later in the email she stated, "I think I will need a day or two to file the Cte online, get the number, then form the bank account, po box, and then get debit card quickly so I can pay StudioOne." This email clearly shows campaign strategy activity. Exhibit Number 9.
16. Ms. Griffin also used her public, governmental email account to inform individuals that she is a candidate for the House of Representatives. In another email she states, "...no I am not running for the presidency. The House however...let's have coffee one morning and catch up." Exhibit Number 10.
17. Additionally, prior to becoming a candidate, Ms. Griffin used her county commission account to provide assistance to another state representative candidate. In an email string, Ms. Griffin offered a candidate for state representative both messaging and campaign fund raising advice. Exhibit Number 11.

Claims

18. Ms. Griffin improperly used public funds to further her nomination and election, and the nomination and election of other State House candidates, by sending campaign-related emails using her Van Buren County Commission email account
19. Additionally, Ms. Griffin solicited campaign contributions using public resources, as described in detail above. This is a direct violation of Section 57 of the MCFA. MCL 169.257.
20. As discussed above, Ms. Griffin made numerous instances of express advocacy from her County provided email address account. This is a direct violation of Section 57 of the MCFA. MCL 169.257.
21. Finally, Ms. Griffin used her email to gauge support for her campaign in direct violation of Section 57 of the MCFA. MCL 169.257.

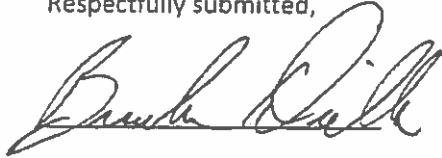
Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, Ms. Griffin is in violation of Section 57 of the MCFA.

Request of Action by the Secretary of State

The Complainant respectfully requests that the Secretary of State immediately investigate this violation and determine as a matter of law that Ms. Griffin has violated the MCFA and assess all appropriate penalties for such violation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce R. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a horizontal line underneath the main body of the text.

Ex. 1



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

October 30, 2014

Tom Stobie
P.O. Box 503
Frankfort, Michigan 49635

Dear Mr. Stobie:

The Department of State (Department) has concluded its initial investigation of the complaint filed by Kimberly Jorns 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. Jorns' complaint, which was filed on June 13, 2014. You filed an answer to the complaint on July 10, 2014, and Ms. Jorns filed a rebuttal statement on August 5, 2014.

Ms. Jorns alleged that you improperly used public funds to further your nomination or election by sending campaign-related emails using your Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools' (FEA Schools) email account.

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 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. Jorns provided 18 emails purportedly sent from your FEA Schools email account. Ms. Jorns asserted the emails expressly advocated for your nomination or election or solicited campaign contributions, causing unlawful expenditures of public funds.

In your answer you admitted that the emails were sent from your FEA Schools email account. However, you assert that several of the emails were sent prior to your becoming a candidate and some were sent to "get feedback from close friends and advisors." You further assert that one email in particular, sent April 22, 2013, was work-specific and meant to inform the school board of your decision to retire as superintendent, not to announce your candidacy.

You further indicated in your answer that you were "advised by friends and supporters that [you] should start consistently using [your] campaign email account [,]" but that you "do not recall ever being advised that it was a violation of the [MCFA] to use [your] school email." You also stated that an AT&T employee set up your new cell phone for you and you did not realize that the phone email was linked to your school account. Finally, you indicated that you no longer have access to your FEA Schools email account and will not use it in the future.

The Department first notes that it is its long-held position that someone who is "testing the waters" and has not made a clear choice to run for a particular public office becomes a "candidate" as defined by the Act once monies are accepted or expended in the assistance of the nomination or election of that candidate – even if that person never formally files to run for office. See *Clarkson Declaratory Ruling*, January 24, 1984 and *Wolpe Declaratory Ruling*, October 22, 1992. An expenditure made to gauge support for your candidacy or to solicit advice regarding your possible candidacy runs afoul of section 57 of the Act if public resources are used.

Because you admitted that the emails submitted as evidence were sent using your FEA Schools account, and these emails discuss your candidacy, the Department has determined that there is a reason to believe that a violation of section 57 of the Act occurred when you used FEA Schools resources by sending emails which expressly advocated your candidacy, forwarded a newsletter which discussed your candidacy and advocated for the defeat of your opponent, solicited funds to support your candidacy or discussed fundraisers, and contained campaign material. Upon making this determination the Department is required by law to attempt to resolve the matter informally. MCL 169.215(10).

Please request that the FEA Schools' treasurer calculate the amount of public resources expended for the emails, including but not limited to your time (by using your rate of pay and the cost for your fringe benefits) and the cost of the FEA Schools' resources used By November 21, 2014. The Department will use this information to facilitate an informal resolution of Ms. Jorns' 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

Ex. 2

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@web.org>
To: Nancy Whaley <rockharbor@12k.com>
Date: 2016-02-16 11:54
Subject: Re: Geneva March Meeting

Nancy,

Thanks so much for the help this morning!! I hope you can come to my Feb 20 fundraiser at Cafe Julia in South Haven, from 6-8 pm. If you need the address, please let me know. Its on Huron St next to the Post Office. Bring a friend if you feel like it!

County Commissioner, District 7

Beth Griffin

269-491-7716 c

269-668-5915 h

On my iPhone

On Feb 15, 2016, at 4:48 PM, Nancy Whaley <rockharbor@12k.com> wrote:

Beth,

We have changed our meeting to Tuesday, March 15 at 7 pm due to election on the 8th

Let me know if you plan to attend by the week before.

Thanks

Nancy Whaley

Geneva Township

Ex. 3

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbco.org>
To: Karen Makay <makayk@vbco.org>
Date: 2016-02-07 08:07
Subject: Re: Fundraiser

Ok thank u Karen, I put you both down!

County Commissioner, District 7
Beth Griffin
269-491-7716 c
269-668-5915 h

On my iPhone

On Feb 6, 2016, at 1:33 PM, Karen Makay <makayk@vbco.org> wrote.

> Beth
> I tried to RSVP for Paul & I online. I submitted but nothing seemed to happen
> Karen
>
> Karen Makay
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>

Ex. 4

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbca.org>
To: Jessica Butler <jess.butler001@gmail.com>
Date: 2014-03-27 21:48
Subject: RE: Van Buren LDD

Jessica,

Here is the info for the Van Buren County Lincoln Day dinner. Let me know how many of you are coming.
Saturday, March 29, 2014 from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM (EDT)
Tickets are \$25.00, \$12.00 students
Decatur VFW Hall
560 N. Phelps
Decatur, MI 49045

My Best,

Beth Griffin

Van Buren County Commissioner, District 7
219 East Paw Paw Street, Suite 303
Paw Paw, MI 49079

(260) 715-2871
(269) 608-5915 h
email griffinb@vbca.org
website www.vbca.org

From: Jessica Butler [jess.butler001@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2014 7:10 PM
To: Beth Griffin
Subject: Van Buren LDD

Hi,

This is Jessica with the LI Governors reelection campaign. Whenever you get the chance, if you could send me the flyer for the LDD I didn't see it on the Facebook page.

Thank you,

Jessica Butler
Regional Grassroots Coordinator
Callej for Michigan

Ex. 5

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vcco.org>
To: Donald Hanson <hansonb@vcco.org>
Date: 2016-01-06 09:02
Subject: RE: Continuing as Vice Chair

Thank you Don,

I visited your Decatur Village meeting this last Monday as a candidate for State Rep, to say hi to people and give them my lit pieces. You got my email about that, right?

What is your preferred way for me to contact you moving forward? Home phone, cell, or email? I know your house has spotty internet/cell phone service, and I would appreciate your input on what is best if I need to reach you?

Thank you,

Beth

-----Original Message-----

From: Donald Hanson
Sent: Wednesday, January 06, 2016 8:57 AM
To: Beth Griffin
Subject: RE: Continuing as Vice Chair

I will support you
Don

-----Original Message-----

From: Beth Griffin
Sent: Tuesday, January 05, 2016 12:48 PM
To: Donald Hanson
Subject: Continuing as Vice Chair

Don,

As we look into the next year for the BCC, I'd be honored to continue to serve as Vice Chair, and will work hard toward our mutual goals this next year. I've mentioned this to Dick G as well, so I wanted to let you know. Happy New Year, and I'll see you soon!

County Commissioner, District 7
Beth Griffin
269-491-7716 c
269-668-5315 h

On my iPhone

Ex. 6

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbco.org>
To: reginahcove-52@yahoo.com
Date: 2015-06-17 19:26
Subject: greetings, and coffee

Regina,

After the last supervisor's meeting, you asked me a question about Aric Nesbitt's house seat, but I was caught up in another conversation. Sorry about that! I'd love to come talk to you about the 2016 House race. What is your schedule? Sometime next week in the afternoon? Thank you!

Beth Griffin
Van Buren County Commissioner, Vice-Chair
Van Buren County Administration Office
219 E. Paw Paw St Suite 303
Paw Paw, MI 49079
Email: griffinb@vbco.org
Cell: 269-491-7716

Ex. 7

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbc.org>
To: Rene Rouisquet <studioconcentrative@com>; julseywallis@gmail.com
Date: 2015-08-07 19:16
Subject: Thanks guys!

Okay... Since my husband does want to track it, I think we cautiously move forward with CTE. Bruce is looped in but we need to work details out, not a big thing since we're not talking a ton of activity, we can still be thinking quiet Sept/Oct, or until Annie makes a move.

I have had some discussion with a few people about timing, and will solicit Aric, Tonya's, and Middaugh's thoughts about timing for announcing when they return at the end of Aug.

Rene, I think I will need a day or two to file the Cte online, get the number, then form the bank account, po box, and then get a debit card quickly so I can pay StudioOne. Husband is fine with one lump sum payment. Would you be okay with this?

County Commissioner, District 7
Beth Griffin
269-491-7716 e
269-668-5015 h

On my iPhone

Ex. 8

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbco.org>
To: "John M. Henry" <henryj@vbco.org>
Date: 2015-06-24 07:54
Subject: RE: Ph # Judy--VBC GOP

Judy's phone numbers are 269-674-3818 home, 269-523-3044 (work or cell, not sure). She just retired from 30 yrs of teaching, so she's enjoying summer!

I missed you being around with your stories... it was refreshing to see you across the table! Welcome back and we need to have coffee, and no I am not running for the presidency. The House however... let's have coffee one morning and catch up.

Beth Griffin
Van Buren County Commissioner, Vice-Chair
Van Buren County Administration Office
219 E. Paw Paw St Suite 303
Paw Paw, MI 49079
Email: griffinb@vbco.org
Cell. 269-491-7716

From: John M. Henry
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2015 7:39 AM
To: Beth Griffin
Subject: Ph # Judy--VBC GOP

Beth—Do you have the ph # of Judy ?, the membership person for the VBCGOP? Attempted to contact on the web site with no success. Thanks. Maybe by close of business today I will be successful in updating my membership. Thanks.

Randy Peat and I were clowning around yesterday when you came over; telling humorous and weird war stories! Fun for little boys.

Ex. 9

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbc.org>
To: Mike Toth <tothm@vbc.org>
Date: 2015-07-21 14:05
Subject: Visit to your house

Hi Mike,

About continuing our discussion about the 2016 open House race, would this Thurs evening, or next Mon or Tues evening work? Maybe just for 30 min, to capture you and Judy's advice/ thoughts- they are important to me!

County Commissioner, District 7

Beth Griffin

269-491-7716 c

269-668-5915 h

On my iPhone

Ex. 10

From: Beth Griffin <bgriffinb@vbcu.org>
To: Rose Pook <resurcook@ccmccast.net>
Date: 2016-05-18 10:16
Subject: Fwd: The Day of Action This Saturday

Maybe Fwd this to the county GOP, encouraging them to get involved? One option (plus the other races) for us locally is my campaign, call 330-8059 or email volunteer@votebethgriffin.com 

County Commissioner, District 7
Beth Griffin
269-481-7716 c
269-668-5915 h

On my iPhone

Begin forwarded message

From: "Michigan Republican Party" <CommOffice@mirap.org>
Date: May 18, 2016 at 8:00:22 AM EDT
To: "Beth Griffin" <bgriffinb@vbcu.org>
Subject: The Day of Action This Saturday
Reply-To: CommOffice@mirap.org

#LeadRight2016

No Images? [Click here](#)



Friends,

Believe it or not, the election is right around the corner. The Michigan Republican Party is ready to work to elect Republicans across the state of Michigan. This Saturday, May 21, we are having our Day of Action in preparation for Election Day. We will use Saturday's Day of Action to activate volunteers all across our state. It's time to get involved and help get Republicans elected!

We are focusing on going door-to-door in our most competitive State House seats around Michigan, and we need your help contacting Republican voters this weekend!

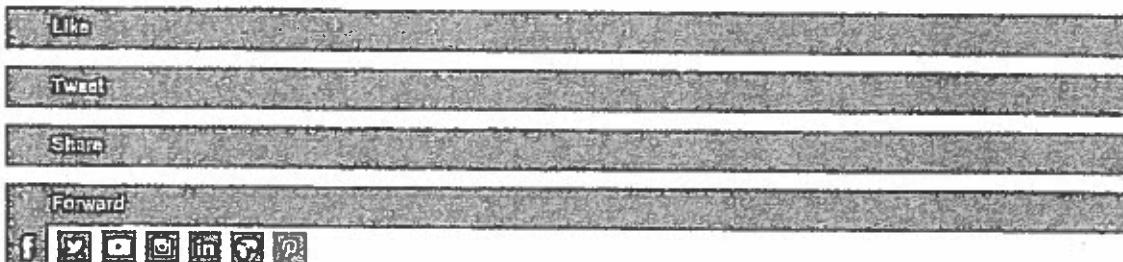
If you are interested in helping get Republicans elected, please sign up here and we'll connect you with other volunteers near you.

Thank you,

Matthew Dobler
Political Director
Michigan Republican Party

P.S. Even if you can't help this weekend, you can forward this email to people who might be able to.

Paid for by the Michigan Republican Party
Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee
520 Seymour Ave. Lansing, MI 48933




Michigan Republican Party

520 Seymour Avenue, Lansing, MI 48933

You were subscribed to receive emails from the MiGOP

[Preferences](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

Ex. 11

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbcu.org>
To: Nancy Strickler <nstrickler@gmail.com>
Date: 2013-11-13 12:25
Subject: RE: quick question about scope of resume
Attachments:  Beth Griffin resume 11.12.13.doc

Hi Nancy,

Thank you for the advice, it is so appreciated! I am attaching my recently updated resume, modeled after Mary Whiteford's recent resume as she applied to the State Women's Commission.

It has my political appointments, but I am thin on "awards, certificates". I've listed my two degrees. For professional achievements, right now I feel like I don't have that many. I'm heavy on the volunteer time, but early in my political career. Also, I am factoring in that this will be Aric's first look at my resume, and you know he is aware that I am looking at running for his House seat in 2016.... hm.

Would you be so kind as to look at this resume, with an eye toward making it tighter, more appealing to the State Chiropractic Board? Would this version of the resume be the same for any initial appointment, assuming the cover letter would provide more detail about why I am interested? That's another thing on my to do list.

If you would peek at this resume, I'll call you after I get back from moving some gallons of water from my church over to the pole barn food pantry. Never a dull moment.:-)

My Best

Beth Griffin

Van Buren County Commissioner, District 7
219 East Paw Paw Street Suite 303
Paw Paw, MI 49074

(260) 715-2871
(260) 668-5815 h
email griffinb@vbcu.org
website www.vbcu.org

From: Nancy Strickler <nstrickler@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 12:44 PM
To: Beth Griffin
Subject: Re: quick question about scope of resume

Good morning Beth: I would concentrate on your professional skills and background the most. Being appointed to a board is a good opportunity to learn and share. I think mentioning your political appointments and achievements are important to your total skill level. Also any awards and

certificates/diplomas should also be mentioned. I have had this same issue for my resume lately. Professional achievements is key I believe. I will be home this afternoon until 3:30 as well. Hope this helps. Nancy

On Tue, Nov 12, 2013 at 6:34 PM, Beth Griffin <GriffinB@vbco.org> wrote:

Nancy,

Nancy, I hope you got my voicemail today, about my need for updating my resume for a possible State Chiropractic Board appointment? As I update my details on my resume, would you be able to help me understand how far back/what all I should include? I'm assuming I would include my partisan political activities, or not? Would starting in 1999 be okay, since that is when I moved into MI? (I taught 8th grade English at Parchment Middle School from 1999 until 2005)

I will be working on this tomorrow AM... maybe I can call you then? Will you be available?

My Best,

Beth Griffin

Van Buren County Commissioner, District 7
219 East Paw Paw Street Suite 303
Paw Paw, MI 49079

(260) 715 2871

(269) 668-5915 h

email griffinb@vbco.org

website www.vbco.org

--

Nancy Steckler

Home: (616) 897-6380

Ex 12

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@libco.org>
To: Mary Whiteford <mary@whitefordwealth.com>
Date: 2013-05-14 11:26
Subject: Re: MRP Article

Oh and that impl because people put your committee name on donation checks!! So it pays to get that done .. And I can help u write an announcement for the paper if u want

Beth Griffin
(260)715-2871c
269-668 5915 h

On my iPhone for now---

On May 14, 2013, at 9:16 PM, "Mary Whiteford" <mary@whitefordwealth.com> wrote

Thank you everyone!
I am meeting Ann Nesbitt on Friday morning @
I was told that I need a platform. Any suggestions?

Sent from my iPhone

On May 14, 2013, at 6:40 PM, "MEPSS" <mepss@opportunityindiana.com> wrote

Congratulations Mary! You need to sit down with house republican campaign committee soon. Let me know how I can be of assistance

Dawn

Sent from my iPhone

On May 14, 2013, at 5:08 PM, Beckie Francis <francis@okland.edu> wrote

Mary Go Girl!! So proud of you. Count me in to help too!
Beckie

Sent from my iPhone

Beckie
Go Grizzlies
www.go-grizzlies.com

On May 14, 2013, at 4:12 PM, Mary Whiteford <mary@whitefordwealth.com> wrote

This is great, Dawn. Thanks!
I want all of you to know that today I announced my candidacy for State Rep!
I now have Margaret O'Brien helping me, too. ♥♥♥
Mary

Sent from my iPhone

On May 14, 2013, at 9:00 AM, "All Excellence in Public Service Series (Public Service Series)" <mepss@opportunityindiana.com> wrote

Good Morning Ladies!

I hope you enjoyed the May MEPSS program. Kelly and Liz, we missed you! Terri Red spoke on Saturday about the Ill. GOP and some of the changes coming in party structure. The following article was in MIRS - which is a daily update of issues and political stories taking place in Lansing and around the state. I thought you might find the article interesting.

[MRP Rolling Out Decentralized Structure](#)

The Michigan Republican Party (MRP) is embarking on a new decentralized management structure that puts more focus on five regional offices designed to "get to the roots of the grassroots."

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"We are moving as much out of Lansing as we can," he said.

The new plan also calls for use of new technology and a "full-time" 24/7 operations structure designed to reach independents, conservatives, men, women, African-Americans, Hispanics and "every American that lives in Michigan with whom we share areas of common interest."

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"We're in the process of making very dynamic changes," Schostak said. "The results over the past several years have shown Gov. (Rick) SNYDER and the Republican-led Legislature know how to fix the damage of the last decade. Now, we need to continue Michigan's comeback; this political plan will allow us to deliver the message of Republican success to every corner of the state, grow our party and elect Republicans in 2014."

The new strategy comes after the MRP emerged from a "spring training" workshop this weekend in Boyne. However, the reworking of the MRP began shortly after the November elections, Schostak said. It involved "looking in every corner" about what went well and what didn't go well.

Roughly 500 Republicans showed up for this first-ever Spring Training session, which included six workshops of state and national panelists. The get-together coincided with a State Central Committee meeting and differs from the late September biennial conference on Mackinac Island in that the Boyne event was more of a training seminar, Schostak said.

"The state party's new political plan is impressive and greatly needed," said Senate Majority Floor Leader Artan MEEKHOFF (R-West Olive). "Republicans in our state have a lot to look forward to next year. We've filled the gaps from 2012 and will take all steps necessary to keep our majority."

May your Day Sparkle and Shine!

Down

Ex. 13

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@kewa.org>
To: Mary Whiteford <mary@whitefordwealth.com>
Date: 2013-05-14 21:42
Subject: Re: MRS Article

Platform idea: continuing the efforts to bring jobs back to MI... Something like "wee off to a great start now lets keep up the momentum to help get our families back to work... Rambling here."

Beth Griffin
(260)715-2871c
259-068-5915 h

On my iPhone for now---

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Sent from my Phone

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Down

Ex 14

From: Beth Griffin <griffb@vccu.edu>
To: Mary Whiteford <mary@whitefordwealth.com>
Date: 2013-05-14 21:27
Subject: Re: MIRS Article

Aric will help u ... You also need to fill out your statement of organization form that makes your campaign comt legal. Mine is "Friends of Beth Griffin" but some people word it like "the committee to elect Mary Whiteford" :) you can get this form from the state website I bet. Call your city clerk for help...

Beth Griffin
(260)715-2871c
269-668-5915 h

On my iPhone for now---

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Beckie
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www.ourgrizzlies.com

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The new strategy comes after the MRP emerged from a "spring training" workshop this weekend in Boyne. However, the reworking of the MRP began shortly after the November elections, Schostak said. It involved "looking in every corner" about what went well and what didn't go well.

Roughly 500 Republicans showed up for this first-ever Spring Training session, which included six workshops of state and national panelists. The get-together coincided with a State Central Committee meeting and differs from the late September biennial conference on Mackinac Island in that the Boyne event was more of a training seminar, Schostak said.

"The state party's new political plan is impressive and greatly needed," said Senate Majority Floor Leader Arian MEEKHOF (R-West Olive). "Republicans in our state have a lot to look forward to next year. We've filled the gaps from 2012 and will take all steps necessary to keep our majority."

May your Day Sparkle and Shine!

Dawn

Ex. 15

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vico.org>
To: Mary Whiteford <mary@whitefordwealth.com>
Cc: MI Excellence in Public Service Series Public Service Series <meps@gopprogram@gmail.com>; Liz Smith <smith-217@hotmail.com>; Buckie Francis <francis@oakland.edu>; Stephanie Boyers <stephanie.boyers@gmail.com>; Kelly Mitchell <kellym2377@yahoo.com>; Laura Turse <laurea@att.net>; Janet Grechler <janetgrechler@gmail.com>
Date: 2013-03-14 20:37
Subject: Re: MIRS Article

Congrats Mary! Now we have Liz and you RUNNING! I'm so excited for you both! Yay!

Beth Griffin
(260)715-2871c
269-668-5915 h

On my iPhone for now***

On May 14, 2013, at 4 12 PM, "Mary Whiteford" <mary@whitefordwealth.com> wrote

This is great Down Thanks!
I want all of you to know that today I announced my candidacy for State Rep!
I now have Margaret O'Brian helping me, too ***
Mary

Sent from my iPhone

On May 14, 2013, at 9:00 AM, "MI Excellence in Public Service Series Public Service Series" <meps@gopprogram@gmail.com> wrote

Good Morning Ladies!

I hope you enjoyed the May MEPSS program. Kelly and Liz, we missed you! Tom Reid spoke on Saturday about the MI GOP and some of the changes coming in party structure. The following article was in MIRS - which is a daily update of issues and political stories taking place in Lansing and around the state. I thought you might find the article interesting.

MRP Rolling Out Decentralized Structure

The Michigan Republican Party (MRP) is embarking on a new decentralized management structure that puts more focus on five regional offices designed to "get to the roots of the grassroots."

MRP Chair Bobby SCHOSTAK said today that after several months of study, the party leadership has come up with a plan geared toward "expanding our voter universe" through peer-to-peer, friend-to-friend contact.

"We are moving as much out of Lansing as we can," he said.

The new plan also calls for use of new technology and a "full-time" 24/7 operations structure designed to reach independents, conservatives, men, women, African Americans, Hispanics and "every American that lives in Michigan with whom we share areas of common interest."

The locations of the five regional offices are expected to be announced in early June.

"We're in the process of making very dynamic changes," Schostak said. "The results over the past several years have shown Gov. (Rick) SHYDER and the Republican-led Legislature knew how to fix the damage of the 'lost decade.' Now, we need to continue Michigan's comeback; this political plan will allow us to deliver the message of Republican success to every corner of the state, grow our party and elect Republicans in 2014."

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"The state party's new political plan is impressive and greatly needed," said Senate Majority Floor Leader Allan MEEKHOFF (R-West Olive). "Republicans in our state have a lot to look forward to next year. We've filled the gaps from 2012 and will take all steps necessary to keep a majority."

May your Day Sparkle and Shine!

Dawn

Ex. 16

8/24/2015

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbc.org>
To: ROSE, LINDSAY <lrose@antelogy.com>
Date: 2014-01-23 11:06
Subject: RE: Palisades Nuclear Power Plant Begins 23rd Refueling Outage
Attachments: image004.jpg image003.png image002.jpg image001.png

Lindsay,

Well, since you asked, and remember that this is a personal request only, no hard feelings if you decline.

We are a political group, we support the Van Buren GOP group by making food for their fundraisers, and we help out various campaigns when it's time... we have a plant sale in May, and a Christmas party in Dec. Some of the ladies expressed an interest in learning more about YOU, and what you do. It would be informal, and we do meet at a restaurant and eat dinner together, have an agenda and meeting, where you would have a spot as a speaker, and you can speak for 5 minutes or more, and answer questions... Our group is down to earth and inquisitive, they'd love to meet you.

My Best,

Beth Griffin

Van Buren County Commissioner, District 7
219 East Paw Paw Street, Suite 303
Paw Paw, MI 49079

(260) 715-2871
(269) 668-5915 h
email: griffinb@vbc.org
website: www.vbc.org

From: ROSE, LINDSAY <lrose@antelogy.com>

Sent: Thursday, January 23, 2014 4:52 PM

To: Beth Griffin

Subject: RE: Palisades Nuclear Power Plant Begins 23rd Refueling Outage

Hi Beth,

I've never spoken at anything like that, but it sounds like fun. Thank you for inviting me! Can you tell me a bit more about your group, such as the types of things they are interested in, the group's mission, what activities they do?

Have a great day,

Lindsay

Lindsay Rose

Communications Specialist

Entergy Palisades Nuclear Plant

O: (269) 764 - 2333 | C: (269) 303 - 6481

Follow Palisades on Facebook and Twitter:



From: Beth Griffin [mailto:GriffinB@vbco.org]

Sent: Thursday, January 23, 2014 11:31 AM

To: ROSE, LINDSAY

Subject: RE: Palisades Nuclear Power Plant Begins 23rd Refueling Outage

Thank you Lindsay, for this information.

On a personal note, do you do outreach/speaking engagements? I would like to invite you to speak at my local Van Buren County Republican women's club about your job/what you do/challenges you face as an advocate for the plant. Would you be interested in coming on a 4th Monday, in the evening some time this year?

My Best,

Beth Griffin

Van Buren County Commissioner, District 7

219 East Paw Paw Street, Suite 303
Paw Paw, MI 49079

(260) 715-2871

(269) 668-5915 h

email: griffinb@vbco.org

website: www.vbco.org

From: ROSE, LINDSAY [lrose@entergy.com]

Sent: Sunday, January 19, 2014 11:46 AM

To: Douglas Cultra; Alain Svilpe; Barbara Rose; Nancy Whaley; Ross Stein; Bob Burr; Brian Dissette; Scott Corbin; Dale Gribler; Paul Bailey; mbradley@berriencounty.org; Greg Krusinga; Dale Hinz; Kathy Wagaman; rbush@berriencounty.org; kklug@berriencounty.org; Mary Judnich; Joe McGarvey; Paul Troost; Christine Muchanic (Christine_Muchanic@levin.senate.gov); Clay McCausland; Mark Ratner ; Turner, Lynn (Lynn.Turner@mail.house.gov); Annie Caputo; John Mike Henry; Richard Godfrey; randifrees@yahoo.com; Beth Griffin; vbcrc@comcast.net; rsarro@allegancounty.org; bwolf@berrienconty.org

Cc: lauck.kb@qcsionline.com; GRAVES, ALLISON LESLEY; Nell Kuhnmuench; Mick Middaugh (mmiddaugh@blc-bci.com); PRIDE, ANN L; Theobalds, Kenneth; Young, Terry

Subject: Palisades Nuclear Power Plant Begins 23rd Refueling Outage

Good morning,

Palisades Nuclear Plant was removed from service at 11 a.m. today to begin our 23rd refueling and maintenance outage. The attached press release has been distributed to local media.

I will be sending you a weekly email throughout the duration of our refueling outage to update you on our progress and describe some of the work activities that are taking place. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or email.

Thank you,

Lindsay

Lindsay Rose

Communications Specialist

Ex. 17

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbcn.org>
To: Cindy Gamrat for State Representative <cindy@cindygamrat.com>
Date: 2014-08-04 09:57
Subject: RE: From the Bottom of My Heart - Thank You!!

Cindy,

Thank you for your passion and dedication to the GOP- it really MATTERS that women take a guiding role in MIGOP's future. It is not the career politicians or the faint of heart that will make a difference in the next 10-20 years... it is US. No matter what the outcome of tomorrow, know that as we look to preserve our principles and freedoms, I think we must also look around us and guide others along the same path. It does take a lot of guts. Thank you for giving of your time and talent for such a noble and deserving goal.

My Best,

Beth Griffin

Van Buren County Commissioner, District 7
219 East Paw Paw Street, Suite 303
Paw Paw MI 49079

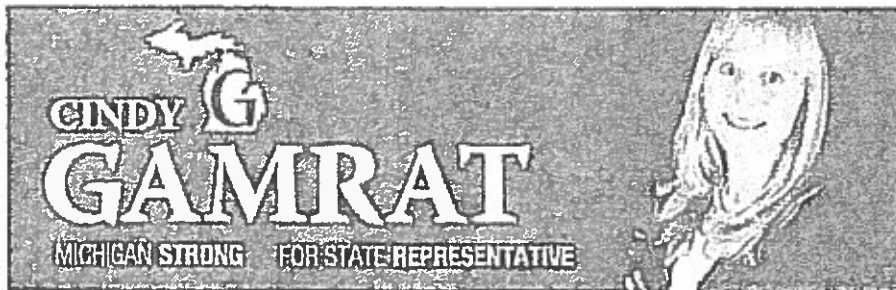
(269) 491-7716 c
(269) 668-5915 h
email griffinb@vbcn.org
website www.vbcn.org

From: Cindy Gamrat for State Representative [cindy@cindygamrat.com]

Sent: Sunday, August 03, 2014 5:39 PM

To: Beth Griffin

Subject: From the Bottom of My Heart - Thank You



Friend -

I am overwhelmed with thankfulness and I'd like to take a minute before the craziness of Tuesday to thank the many people who have invested their time, energy, and resources in supporting our MichiganSTRONG campaign over the last year!

I thank God for all of the many amazing blessings along the way and for calling me out to this endeavor in the first place - exactly a year ago this weekend! I have felt His hand covering and guiding me the entire way and for that I am so grateful! This year has truly been an incredible and amazing journey, more of spiritual growth and faith than of politics. I have learned that God equips the called and to always give Him room to show up and He will come through every time, even if it's not the exact way I thought He would.



I'd like to thank my family for jumping into this with both feet with me! There's no way I



can even come close to describing their dedication and sacrifice over the last year and what that has meant to me. My husband Jon and my son Joey have basically been my campaign managers, sign coordinators, media and marketing producers, volunteer coordinators, door knockers, researchers, editors, and the list just goes on and on! My daughter Paige has been our loyal headquarters worker, spending every and all day on Saturdays and many other days keeping the doors of our headquarters open while addressing literally thousands of postcards! Both my daughters, Meghan and Paige, have kicked in by keeping the house up, making dinner, doing laundry, etc. And Meghan has been a rock star at the doors, knocking on more doors and handing out more literature than probably any other 14 year old in the state. She loves meeting people at the doors and I have talked to voters that have told me they have already talked to my daughter and she won their vote!

I could not have done this in any way without my family and all that they have put aside in their lives over the last year to be part of this with me. It has truly been a family effort as they see the importance of what is at stake for Allegan, for Michigan, and for our future!

We could also not have done this without the donors who have made contributions to our campaign. Jon and I are not independently wealthy, and although we knew in the beginning going into this that this race would take between \$40,000 - \$60,000, we had no idea where that money would actually come from as we could not write ourselves a \$40,000 check like many candidates in the political realm do. To see the outpouring of \$40,000 in donations come through from hundreds of supporters who believe in our conservative values has been incredible! From \$5 donations and many, many \$20 - \$50 donations, God has provided through donors to cover exactly what we have needed and when we have needed it. From early on to just this week, we have been blown away by the generosity of so many!



Lastly, we could not have done this without the backbone of every successful campaign, our volunteers. We have been so blessed to have an

AMAZING group of volunteers helping on our team! The fun part has been that the majority of our volunteers have been teenagers! You can meet our core MichiganSTRONG team by clicking [here](#). They have been the glue keeping the campaign wheels going day in and day out! Joey, Paige, Meghan, Quinton, Karolyn, Megan, Adelaide, and Aubrey - each of you have demonstrated skills and understanding far beyond your years, and I am so encouraged to know that you are already leaders and influencers wherever God has you!

We have had many, many, many additional volunteers who have helped out with a variety of tasks from manning our headquarters, addressing envelopes, making calls, entering data, hosting events, walking in parades, flipping pancakes, walking door to door, putting up signs, handing out literature, talking to neighbors, and the list goes on. Without them, we certainly would have fallen short of reaching the number of voters we needed to reach! They have also been an encouragement and reminder to me of what this is all about!

I'd also like to thank the people of Allegan County! Thank you for taking the time to meet us at your doors or talk to us on the phone. It has truly been such a blessing to get to know so many of you and also to have had the opportunity to pray with some of you. Meeting all the people I have met over this past year has truly been the highlight of my campaign and has greatly impacted me! If I am elected, I will carry with me a serious burden of responsibility into the State House to represent the people of Allegan County well!

May God hear our prayers and bless our families, our state, and our nation!

With Firm Reassurance on Divine Providence,
Cindy

P.S. To see our recently produced television commercial, click [here](#).

P.S.S. Yesterday I had the treat of being on the Morning Grand VARIETY and then spending time with a large group of volunteers throughout the day knocking on the doors of more Allegan voters in Holland and Saugatuck! Thank you to Dave Agema, our Republican National Committeeman, for coming out to help out! This email includes pictures of a few of them.



Cindy Gornat for State Representative

<http://www.cindygornat.com>

Paid for by Citizens to Elect Cindy Gamrat · PO Box 452, Plainwell, MI 49080, United States

This email was sent to griffinb@vbco.org. To stop receiving emails, [click here](#).

You can also keep up with Cindy Gamrat for State Representative on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).

Created with [NationBuilder](#), the essential toolkit for leaders.

Ex. 18

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbco.org>
To: Heather Mitchell <hmitchell@antwerptownship.com>
Date: 2014-06-16 17:19
Subject: RE: Antwerp Township Lists

Thanks for the compliment, and for these lists.... one more question. You mentioned that 40% of the seniors are primary voters... I assume that means 40% of 22377 so 1342 seniors voted in recent primaries?

My Best!

Beth Griffin

Van Buren County Commissioner, District 7
219 East Paw Paw Street, Suite 303
Paw Paw, MI 49079

(269) 491-7716 e
(269) 668-5915 h
email: griffinb@vbco.org
website: www.vbco.org

From: Heather Mitchell <hmitchell@antwerptownship.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 19, 2014 4:18 PM
To: mallawannmom@yahoo.com; Beth Griffin
Subject: Antwerp Township Lists

Beth

A few things I have attached lists and labels depending on what you want to use. There are 1520 voters under the age of 60 who have voted in either or both of the last two primaries...such a sad commentary on our country, but I digress. The second is the list and labels for all voters over 60. I'm not sure why I was saying 1600 because there are 2237 over the age of 60. 40% of those registered are voting in primaries. Total voters in Antwerp is 8951.

I appreciate all that you do and think you are a great representative of this township

Heather

Heather Mitchell
Antwerp Township Clerk
24821 Front Ave
Moltawon, MI 49071
269.668.2615 x200

Ex. 19

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbco.org>
To: Tony Dacoba <dacobat@vbco.org>
Date: 2016-07-12 08:43
Subject: Re: They're with Annie

Thanks Tony.

County Commissioner, District 7
Beth Griffin
269-591-7716 c
269-668-5915 h

On my iPhone

On Jul 12, 2016, at 8:32 AM, Tony Dacoba <DacobaT@vbco.org> wrote:

fyi

From: Kathryn Tapper [<mailto:bounce@bounce.mynqp.com>] On Behalf Of Kathryn Tapper
Sent: Monday, July 11, 2016 2:20 PM
To: Tony Dacoba
Subject: They're with Annie

Tony -

The Michigan State American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) is confident that when Annie is elected, she will fight to improve the lives of working families, and bring economic justice to the workplace.

We are so honored to add this partner to our growing list of supporters. Will you add yours too?

Stand behind Annie and the members of the AFL-CIO and chip in \$100, \$50, or \$25 today.

We have a real chance of taking back this seat and winning in November, but we can't do this alone.

Please make a secure, online contribution of \$25 or more today and help us win.

Thanks,

Kathryn Tapper

Campaign Manager - Anne Brown for State Representative

P.S. Help us gain momentum by contributing \$100, \$50, \$25 or whatever you can today!

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Committee to Elect Annie Brown
114 Michigan Ave
South Haven MI 49090 United States

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Ex. 20

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbcc.org>
To: Jr Henry <jrhenry@yahoo.com>
Date: 2013-05-04 10:18
Subject: RE: Ltr To Editor

Sounds like someone running for election... early? or sour grapes. Unfortunate- sounds like he is torturing form facts- we await Doug's information too...

My Best,

Beth Griffin

Van Buren County Commissioner, District 7
219 East Paw Paw Street, Suite 303
Paw Paw, MI 49079

(260) 715-2871
(269) 668-5915 h
email griffinb@vbcc.org
website www.vbcc.org

From: Jr Henry <jrhenry66@yahoo.com>

Sent: Saturday May 04, 2013 1:37 PM

To: Douglas Cuthra; dick godley; don hamson; sue hammond; dick freestone; catherine Bess; Griffin

Subject: Ltr To Editor

In the Herald-Passadium Letter to the Editor section dtd 4 May, 2013 was a letter crafted by Tom Erdmann. It reads as follows:

"In case anyone in Van Buren County missed some important information at the end of your item on page B2 of the April 26 edition, I want to bring it to your attention.

The audit of the fiscal year ended Sept 30, 2012, showed that the county raised \$21.65 million and spent only \$16.8 million. Sounds pretty good. If you're not a taxpayer, that is. The \$4.85 million that they kept is 28.8 percent. Now, getting an A-plus from an auditor is nice, but I'm surprised that any of the Republican commissioners raised the question of a tax cut.

Maaybe it just wasn't reported. Perhaps more taxpayers need to attend county board meetings and ask the question. A related question involves whether this information would have been on B2 if it involved Berrien County."

Doug, I do not remember the audit this way. I am certain that General Fund revenues exceeded expenses, the amount? The percentage? I also do not have the article he referred to in the April 26, 2013 edition. Please call on Monday when you have a moment to clarify the numbers, acquire the article on 26 April and do the appropriate "fact finding".

My "gut reaction" is to fire back for his uniformed and sophomoric conclusions that the current Board is not managing the resources well and appropriately. With that stated, I will await your feedback before over reacting. Thanks for the help.

Mike

Ex. 21

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbcn.org>
To: enriqueta.turanzas@live.com
Date: 2016-07-07 19:42
Subject: Fwd: Yard Signs

County Commissioner, District 7
Beth Griffin
269-491-7716 c
269-668-5915 h

On my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Tony Dacoba <DacobaT@vbcn.org>
Date: July 7, 2016 at 11:58:46 AM EDT
To: Beth Griffin <GriffinB@vbcn.org>
Subject: FW: Yard Signs

FYI

From: Annie Brown [<mailto:bounce@bounce.mynqp.com>] On Behalf Of Annie Brown
Sent: Thursday, July 07, 2016 8:55 AM
To: Tony Dacoba
Subject: Yard Signs

Tony -

Would you like an Annie Brown yard sign? Please let us know! [Click here to fill out our yard sign form and we will deliver it the next time we are in your neck of the woods.](#)

If you already have a yard sign it's time to get it out so you can show your support for our campaign!

#TeamAnnie

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Committee to Elect Annie Brown
114 Michigan Ave
South Haven MI 49090 United States

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Ex: 22

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vbcc.org>
To: Tony Dacoba <dacoba@vbcc.org>
Date: 2016-07-12 08:43
Subject: Re: They're with Annie

Thanks Tony.

County Commissioner, District 7
Beth Griffin
269-491-7716 c
269-668-5915 h

On my iPhone

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fyi

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To: Tony Dacoba
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We have a real chance of taking back this seat and winning in November, but we can't do this alone.

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Thanks,

Kathryn Tapper
Campaign Manager - Annie Brown for State Representative

P.S. Help us gain momentum by contributing \$100, \$50, \$25 or whatever you can today!

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South Haven MI 49090 United States

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Ex. 23

From: Beth Griffin <griffinb@vncs.org>
To: enriquezaturanzas@live.com
Date: 2016-06-06 09:56
Subject: Fwd: Tony, can we count on you this Saturday?

County Commissioner, District 7

Beth Griffin

269-491-7716 c

269-668-5915 h

On my iPhone

Begin forwarded message

From: Tony Dacoba <DacobaT@vbcc.org>
Date: June 3, 2016 at 10:13:57 AM EDT
To: Beth Griffin <GriffinB@vbcc.org>
Subject: FW: Tony, can we count on you this Saturday?

FYI

From: Annie Brown [mailto:bounce@bounce.mynqp.com] On Behalf Of Annie Brown
Sent: Thursday, June 02, 2016 8:55 AM
To: Tony Dacoba
Subject: Tony, can we count on you this Saturday?

Tony,

Please join us for a group canvass this Saturday, June 4th from 1:30pm to 4:30pm.

We will be meeting at 313 W Michigan Ave in Paw Paw. We'll run through a quick training and send you out with a canvassing partner to spread the word about our campaign.

You can sign up for the canvass right here: <http://bit.ly/CanvassJune4>

If you're interested in volunteering, but can't canvass, contact Kathryn via email at Tapper.Kathryn@gmail.com or by phone at 269.903.7881. We can set you up with office work or data entry positions on our team.

- Team Annie

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--

Committee to Elect Annic Brown
114 Michigan Ave
South Haven MI 49090 United States

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[unsubscribe](#).

Ex-24

From: Beth Griffin <bgriffin@vbnco.org>
To: Jacques Philippe <jacque@philippe.us>
Date: 2016-06-13 21:27
Subject: Re: you're invited

I'll be there, Jacques- thank you!

County Commissioner, District 7
Beth Griffin
269-491-7716 c
269-568-5915 h

On my iPhone

On Jun 13, 2016, at 8:06 PM, Jacques Philippe <jacque@philippe.us> wrote.

Attention Candidates for Office in Van Buren County:

The Van Buren County Republican Women would like to invite you to our Monday, June 27, 2016 Regular Meeting, at Michelle's Stone Ridge Inn. We would like to extend this opportunity for you to introduce yourself to our members.

The meeting begins at 6:00pm with social time, settling in and ordering dinner, by 6:30. Candidates will be presented on a first come, first serve basis, speaking for 3 minutes immediately following dinner (approx. 7:00pm).

R.S.V.P. is appreciated

FYI-Republican Party dues are \$15 per year. If you have not yet solidified your County Party affiliation, please consider doing so, at this meeting with membership chair Judy Janssen, judyjanssen@aol.com

Thank You, and we hope to see you there
Jacques Philippe
President, Van Buren County Republican Women

Jacques Philippe
Arlington Township Supervisor
269-767-0641