

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

In the Matter of a Complaint by
Jeffrey Shorts, Coventry

File No. 2010-125

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Complainant Jeffrey Shorts brings this complaint pursuant to General Statutes § 9-7b alleging that the candidate committee *Joan Lewis for State Representative* purchased an advertisement in a program booklet for the Rockville High School Marching Band Festival. The complainant alleged that this advertisement did not promote the candidate but was simply congratulatory of the band. After the investigation of the Complainant's complaint, the Commission makes the following findings and conclusions:

1. Joan Lewis established a candidate committee for the 8th district state representative seat on March 4, 2010. *See* SEEC Form 1 – Registration by Candidate (*Joan Lewis for State Representative*, March 4, 2010)
2. On March 11, 2010, Lewis completed the SEEC Form 10, indicating her intent to participate in the Citizens' Election Program and abide by the voluntary limits imposed under the program. *See* SEEC Form CEP-10 (*Joan Lewis for State Representative*, March 11, 2010).
3. The candidate committee submitted an application for a grant from the Citizens' Election Fund on June 15, 2010. *See* SEEC Form CEP-15 (*Joan Lewis for State Representative*, June 15, 2010).
4. The committee received a grant from the Citizens' Election Fund totaling \$26,000 in two payments: the first of \$7,800 on June 28, 2010, and the second of \$18,200 on June 29, 2010. *See* SEEC Form 30 – July 10 Report (*Joan Lewis for State Representative*, July 10, 2010).
5. The committee purchased an advertisement in the program guide of the Rockville High School Marching Band, for \$40. *See* SEEC Form 30 - October 10 Report (*Joan Lewis for State Representative*, October 10, 2010) (reflecting payment of \$40 from Lewis candidate committee to Rockville High School Marching Band).
6. The advertisement did not specifically promote Lewis's candidacy. Instead, it simply promoted Lewis only generally. The candidate's name was written in all capital letters in

bold print. She was shown in a photograph and identified as the "State Representative 8th District" with the towns included in the district "Columbia, Coventry & Vernon" listed below the picture.

7. The advertisement included the proper attribution, stating that it was paid for by the candidate committee, listing the campaign treasurer, and declaring that it was approved by the candidate as required under General Statutes § 9-621.
8. General Statutes § 9-607 (g) outlines the permissible expenditures for committees regulated by the Commission, including candidate committees. Among those permissible expenditures is "purchasing tickets or advertising from charities, inaugural committees, or other civic organizations if for a political purpose" General Statutes § 9-607 (g)(2)(U).
9. Qualified candidate committees may make payments for advertising that promotes the election or nomination of the candidate, but they may not make expenditures to or for the benefit of other committees. *See Regulations of Conn. State Agencies §§ 9-706-2 (a) (allowing participating candidate committee to make expenditures to purchase advertising); 9-706-2 (b) (8) (prohibiting participating candidate committees from making expenditures to promote another candidate or committee).*
10. The advertisements that *Joan Lewis for State Representative* purchased from the Rockville band did not specifically exhort the reader to vote for or support Lewis's candidacy but did promote her generally.
11. Any advertisements that candidate committees purchase should clearly and specifically promote the candidate for which the committee was established.

ORDER

The following Order is recommended on the basis of the aforementioned findings:

That no further action be taken.

Adopted this 25th day of April of 2012 at Hartford, Connecticut.



Stephen F. Cashman
By Order of the Commission