

State Elections Enforcement Commission

Press Release



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STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION AGREES TO SETTLE CAMPAIGN FINANCE CASE

HARTFORD, CT—May 6, 2009 The State Elections Enforcement Commission announced today that it has reached a settlement with [Senator Thomas Gaffey](#), chairperson, of the Government Action Fund political committee (“GAF PAC”), and its treasurer, [Dennis Ceneviva](#) to settle a case involving improper campaign expenditures and improper reporting of such expenditures.

The Commission imposed a \$6,000 civil penalty against Senator Gaffey and a \$3,000 civil penalty against Dennis Ceneviva for multiple violations concerning the operation of GAF PAC from 2004 to 2007. The Commission ordered that the political committee be terminated and that the \$20,000 balance, after expenses, be forfeited to the General Fund. The Commission estimates that the forfeiture will be approximately \$10,000. Senator Thomas Gaffey has agreed not to establish another political committee for a period of one year.

After a lengthy Commission initiated investigation, which the Commission acknowledges the cooperation of Senator Gaffey and Dennis Ceneviva -- The Commission found that Senator Gaffey improperly received duplicate payments totaling approximately \$2,800 from both the State of Connecticut and GAF PAC, for costs related to attendance at various legislative conferences. GAF PAC funds were also used to pay for expenses of a companion’s cell phone and travel to attend such conferences.

Senator Gaffey did not provide the proper documentation to establish the lawful purpose of the expenditures for which payment was made from GAF PAC directly to his personal credit card, which is in violation of state law. His treasurer, Dennis Ceneviva was found to have neglected to keep proper records, fully disclose expenditures and receipts, or follow procedural requirements for making such payments from GAF PAC funds.

The Commission finds that the use of political committee funds for personal use to be a serious and grave act, in particular, receiving reimbursement from the State of Connecticut as well as from GAF PAC. Accordingly, the Commission imposed its second largest fine for campaign finance violations against a sitting elected official.

The commission notes that the improper PAC expenditures have no relationship to the Citizens’ Election Program. A copy of the orders that were agreed to and adopted are attached. For more information please contact Nancy S. Nicolescu, Director of Communications, Legislative Affairs and Candidate Services for the State Elections Enforcement Commission at nancy.nicolescu@ct.gov

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