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**LOS ANGELES CITY ETHICS COMMISSION**  
**N E W S**  
*...preserving the public trust*

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For Immediate Release:  
Tuesday, November 8, 2005

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**CITY ETHICS COMMISSION FINES COUNCILMEMBER  
FOR CAMPAIGN REPORTING FAILURES**

At its regular meeting today, the City Ethics Commission voted unanimously to find Fifth District Councilmember Jack Weiss in violation of City campaign reporting laws in 32 instances for failing to provide campaign literature for the public file in connection with his 2001 Council campaign, and voted 3-1 to impose a \$4,800 fine against the Councilman for those violations. The Commission's action came after considering a proposed order issued in October by an Administrative Law Judge, who heard the case after the Commission had referred the matter to the Office of Administrative Hearings last spring for a hearing and recommendation. After hearing oral arguments at today's meeting and certifying that each panel member had reviewed the full record in the case, the Commission also voted 4-0 to find the Councilmember and his officeholder account treasurer, Jan Wasson, in violation of City disclosure regulations in eight other instances for failing to timely report \$1,534 in officeholder expenditures as required. The Commission, however, voted 3-1 to impose no fine for those violations. The hearing officer's proposed order had recommended a \$6,000 fine for all 40 violations, while for those violations the Commission staff had recommended a total fine of \$25,200.

"While it's never easy to enforce campaign laws, promoting accountability is our job," said Ethics Commission Executive Director, LeeAnn Pelham. "Today's hearing shows that both as staff prosecutors who bring these cases and as Ethics Commissioners who are called on to make tough decisions, this agency will continue to pursue its enforcement mandate in a vigorous, deliberative, and fair manner."

The reporting requirements at issue in today's case involved two provisions of City law that were designed to help assure a public accounting for certain campaign and officeholder account activities. To create a central public repository where, during the course of an election, the public can examine the campaign literature distributed by candidates and their committees, Los Angeles Municipal Code section 49.7.11 C requires a candidate for City office who sends a mailing or distributes more than 200 substantially similar pieces of campaign literature to send a copy of the mailing or other literature to the City Ethics Commission at the same time it is given to the post office or otherwise distributed. To ensure that expenditures from an officeholder account are connected to the official duties of elected officials as required by Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 49.7.12, Los Angeles Administrative Code section 24.10 establishes certain reporting

requirements, including the timely disclosure of all officeholder expenditures of \$50 or more and the date, amount and nature of the expenditure. Officeholder accounts may be established by elected officials under City law to help them serve, communicate with or assist their constituents. They are funded through the limited contributions of donors, and are capped overall at a total of \$75,000 per fiscal year.

The City Ethics Commission considered the case pursuant to its authority under City Charter Section 706(c). According to City law, the Commission is authorized to levy fines of up to \$5,000 for each violation or three times the amount that was failed to be reported, or that was unlawfully contributed or expended, whichever is greater.

For more information, contact the Commission at (213) 978-1960.

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