
LOS ANGELES CITY ETHICS COMMISSION
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**ENGINEERS AND ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATION CIVIC BETTERMENT
ASSOCIATION NAMED IN ETHICS COMMISSION ENFORCEMENT CASE**

Independent Expenditure Disclosure Violations Alleged

The Executive Director of the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission today issued a public announcement that there is probable cause to believe that the Engineers and Architects Association Civic Betterment Association violated the City's independent expenditure disclaimer and disclosure laws in 10 instances in connection with the Association's support of Antonio Villaraigosa's 2005 Mayoral campaign. The Accusation charges that the Association failed in seven instances to include a disclaimer in its independent expenditure communications that the communications were not authorized by a candidate or candidate-controlled committee. During the 2005 elections, any person who made independent expenditures to support or oppose a city candidate was required by City Charter §470(l) to clearly indicate on any material published, displayed or broadcast that it was not authorized by a candidate or candidate's committee. According to the Accusation, the Association also failed to disclose its full committee name within two automated telephone calls as required by Los Angeles Municipal Code §49.7.26.3 (B), and failed to file a copy of campaign literature with the Commission at the time of its distribution, as required by Los Angeles Municipal Code §49.7.11 (C).

The announcement by Executive Director LeeAnn Pelham was made following her finding of probable cause and according to public disclosure procedures required by City law. The matter will now go to the agency's five-member Ethics Commission for an administrative hearing to determine if a violation occurred. Procedurally, the Commission may 1) conduct its own hearing, 2) hear the matter itself with a hearing officer presiding, or 3) refer the matter to a hearing officer for a preliminary recommendation. The City Charter Section 706(c) authorizes the Commission 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. As in all cases referred to the Commission for an administrative hearing, a respondent is presumed innocent of any violation of City law, unless and until such time that the violation is proved in an administrative hearing held pursuant to Charter Section 706 (c).

The Commission and its staff may not comment on this matter until after a final determination has been made. For copies of the Accusation, please contact the Commission at (213) 978-1960.

The City Ethics Commission is a semi-independent agency created by Los Angeles voters in 1990 to impartially administer and enforce the governmental ethics, campaign finance, and lobbying laws of the City of Los Angeles. With a staff of 27 and an operating budget of \$2.3 million, the Commission conducts training, provides advice, audits political campaigns, and makes legislative recommendations. It also is authorized by the voters to conduct investigations and levy administrative penalties against violators of the laws under its jurisdiction.

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