
LOS ANGELES CITY ETHICS COMMISSION

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**CITY ETHICS COMMISSION DIRECTOR ISSUES PUBLIC ACCUSATION
AGAINST COUNCILMEMBER FOR 2002 SPECIAL ELECTION VIOLATIONS**

Los Angeles City Ethics Commission Executive Director LeeAnn Pelham announced today that there is probable cause to believe that former Second District Candidate and now Sixth District Councilmember Tony Cardenas and his 2002 committee, "Tony Cardenas for City Council – General," violated campaign finance and disclosure provisions of City law in 26 instances in connection with his March 2002 special election runoff campaign in the Second Council District. According to City law, following a finding of probable cause, the Executive Director must make a public announcement of the Accusation. The matter will now go to the agency's five-member Ethics Commission to determine whether violations have occurred. 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, Respondents are presumed innocent of any violation of City law, unless and until such time that the violation is determined by the Commission at a public hearing.

The Accusation alleges that Cardenas and his 2002 runoff campaign committee accepted and deposited 14 contributions totaling \$5,600 in excess of the per person contribution limits; accepted and deposited non-individual contributions totaling \$42,400 in excess of the \$150,000 non-individual cumulative contribution limit established for Council candidates; and failed to file 11 pieces of campaign literature with the Commission. Charter section 470(c)(3) establishes a \$500 per election limit on the total amount any City Council candidate may receive from any person. Charter section 470(c)(7)(A) permits Council candidates to receive no more than \$150,000 from all non-individuals in any election. Los Angeles Municipal Code section 49.7.11(C) requires candidates to submit copies of mass mailings to the Commission at the time they are disseminated.

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

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