
LOS ANGELES CITY ETHICS COMMISSION

N E W S

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**PUBLIC ACCUSATION ISSUED BY CITY ETHICS COMMISSION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
National Women's Political Caucus of the San Fernando Valley
Charged with Failure to Comply with Disclaimer Requirement on 2009
Independent Expenditure Communication**

According to a public accusation issued today by the Executive Director of the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission, probable cause exists to believe that the National Women's Political Caucus – San Fernando Valley Chapter ("NWPC-SFVC") failed to comply with disclaimer requirements for an independent expenditure communication in support of City Controller candidate Wendy Greuel and City Council candidate Robyn Ritter Simon during the 2009 election cycle. The accusation states that by not identifying anywhere on the mailer that it was "Not authorized by a City candidate", the NWPC-SFVC failed to comply with the disclaimer requirements established by City law.

Under the Los Angeles City Charter, persons or organizations who make independent expenditures supporting or opposing City candidates must include specific disclaimers established by ordinance in all campaign communications. Los Angeles Municipal Code sections 49.7.26.3(B)(1) and 49.7.26.3(A) require that independent expenditure communications state that they are not authorized by a City candidate and that the communication was "Paid for by" the committee. The mailer must also include the committee's address and city.

According to City law, following a finding of probable cause, the Executive Director must make a public announcement of the Accusation. Under the City Charter, the Commission then has the responsibility to determine whether the alleged violations occurred, and, if so, what penalty should apply. A public evidentiary hearing by the Commission must be held to determine if a violation has occurred. The Commission may 1) conduct its own hearing, 2) hear the matter itself with a hearing officer presiding or 3) refer the matter to an outside hearing officer.

The charges go now to the Ethics Commission board for a procedural determination about how it will choose to hear the matter. NWPC-SFVC 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 City Charter Section 706(c). If the Commission determines that a violation has occurred, the maximum penalty that can be levied is \$5,000 for each violation or three times the amount that was not properly reported or unlawfully contributed, expended, gave, or received, whichever is greater.

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.

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 21 and an operating budget of \$2.1 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.