

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )  
COUNTY OF RICHLAND )

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF: )  
COMPLAINT C2014-097 )

Michael A. Wilson, )  
Respondent. )

**DECISION AND ORDER**

Krista Thom, )  
Complainant. )

STATE ETHICS  
COMMISSION

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Pursuant to S. C. Code Ann. § 8-13-320(10)(i)(Supp. 2014), the State Ethics Commission reviewed the above captioned complaint on November 19, 2014 charging the Respondent, Michael A. Wilson, with violation a of Section 8-13-1314(A)(3). Present at the meeting were Commission Members James I. Warren, III, Chair, Sandy Templeton, Frank Grimbball, Julie S. Jeffords-Moose, Twana N. Burris-Alcide, Regina H. Lewis, and Sherril A. Lydon. Thomas M. Galardi recused. The following allegation was considered:

**ALLEGATION**

On March 11, 2014 the State Ethics Commission received a complaint filed by Krista Thom of Kansasville, WI against Attorney General Michael A Wilson. The complaint alleged that on November 13, 2009 and March 11, 2010, the Respondent accepted campaign contributions from a registered lobbyist identified as Joyce C. Hearn.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

Having carefully reviewed the evidence presented, the Commission finds as fact:

1. The Respondent, Michael A. Wilson, is and at all times relevant was the South Carolina Attorney General. He was re-elected in November 2014.

2. A review of the State Ethics Commission's Lobbyist Report Index revealed that Ms. Joyce C. Hearn registered as a lobbyist for the SC Credit Union League on January 8, 2009, and January 13, 2010.

3. A review of Respondent's 2009 January 10th Campaign Disclosure Report (CD) filed on January 15, 2010, revealed that Respondent reported that on November 13, 2009, he received a campaign contribution from Ms. Hearn in the amount of \$150.00. It should be noted that the aforementioned report documented a scrivener's error for the report year. The report was a 2010 January 10th CD. This contribution was received outside the four year statute of limitations.

4. A review of Respondent's 2010 April 10th CD, filed on April 15, 2010, revealed that Respondent reported that on March 11, 2010 he received a campaign contribution from Ms. Hearn in the amount of \$50.00.

5. According to Respondent's written response he received a letter dated March 6, 2014 from the Commission in reference to the lobbyist's contributions from Ms. Hearn. Respondent reported that as soon as the letter was received, a refund check was issued, and returned to Ms. Hearn on March 13, 2014.

6. Staff reviewed a copy of check number 1404 drafted from Respondent's First Community Bank campaign account. The check was dated March 13, 2014, for payment to Ms. Hearn in the amount of \$200.00.

7. Respondent reported that any error in regard to the contribution from Ms. Hearn was inadvertent and immediately corrected. Furthermore, the correction was made



prior to being served with the complaint. Respondent was served with the complaint on March 18, 2014.

**CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

1. The Respondent was a candidate, as defined by Section 8-13-1300(4).
2. The State Ethics Commission has personal and subject matter jurisdiction.
3. Section 8-13-1314(A)(3) prohibits a candidate from accepting a contribution from a registered lobbyist.
4. Section 8-13-320(9)(d) provides for a four year statute of limitations.

**DECISION**

THEREFORE, based upon evidence presented, the State Ethics Commission has determined that there is not probable cause to indicate that the Respondent, Michael A. Wilson, violated Section 8-13-1314(A)(3) within the Commission's four year statute of limitations. Further the complaint is dismissed due to the Complainant, Krista Thom's, failure to cooperate at all in the investigation, which gives rise to the belief that she did not have personal knowledge of the allegations in the complaint. The Commission has therefore dismissed the charges in accordance with Section 8-13-320(10)(i), and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder.

IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 24<sup>th</sup> DAY OF December, 2014.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION



JAMES I. WARREN, III  
CHAIRMAN

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

