

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )  
COUNTY OF RICHLAND )

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF: )  
COMPLAINANT C2014-114 )

Michael A. Wilson, )  
Respondent. )

Krista Thom, )  
Complainant. )

**DECISION AND ORDER**

STATE ETHICS  
COMMISSION

2014 DEC 29 PM 4:16

RECEIVED

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)(1) and Section 8-13-1320(1). Present at the meeting were Commission Members James I. Warren, III, Chair, Sandy Templeton, Frank Grimball, Julie S. Jeffords-Moose, Twana N. Burris-Alcide, Regina H. Lewis, and Sherri 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 the Respondent received contributions from a single donor, Van Hipp, which exceeded the \$3,500.00 per election cycle contribution limit.

**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 Respondent's 2010 pre-election CD filed on May 25, 2010 for the June 8, 2010 primary election, revealed that on April 29, 2010 Respondent disclosed a campaign contribution from Van Hipp in the amount of \$2,000.00.

3. A review of Respondent's 2010 July 10th CD filed on July 15, 2010 for the June 8, 2010 primary election, revealed that on May 25, 2010 Respondent disclosed a campaign contribution from Van Hipp in the amount of \$1,500.00. In addition on June 10, 2010, Respondent disclosed a campaign contribution from Van Hipp in the amount of \$2,000.00.

4. A review of Respondent's CDs revealed that between April 29, 2010 and June 10, 2010, Respondent received contributions from Van Hipp in the amount of \$5,500.00.

5. According to Respondent's written response, the contribution Respondent received from Van Hipp on June 10, 2010 was incorrect and the amended date is outside the seven day window as provided in Section 1320(1).

6. According to staff Respondent's attorney was personally served with the complaint on March 18, 2014. A review of Respondent's 2010 July 10th amendment 4 CD filed on March 16, 2014 for the June 8, 2010 primary election, revealed that on June 16, 2010 Respondent disclosed a campaign contribution from Van Hipp in the amount of \$2,000.00.

7. A review of the Respondent's First Community Bank deposit slip, number 209, dated June 16, 2010, revealed that check number 1464 drafted from Van Hipp's Wachovia Bank account in the amount of \$2,000.00 was deposited into Respondent's campaign account.



8. As early as March 7, 2014 the media began asking questions regarding contributions received by Respondent and others, and several articles began appearing days after receipt of the complaint.

**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)(1) limits campaign contributions to a statewide candidate to \$3,500 per election cycle.
4. Section 8-13-1320(1) provides that a contribution made on or before the seventh day after a primary or primary runoff is attributed to the primary or primary runoff, respectively.

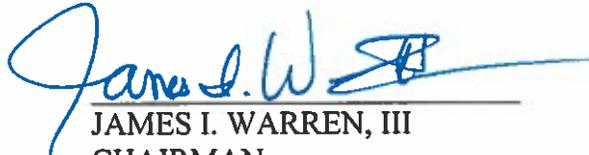
**DECISION**

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 8-13-1313(A)(1) or Section 8-13-1320(1). 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

