STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF RICHLAND	)	BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
IN THE MATTER OF: COMPLAINT C2014-116	)	
Michael A. Wilson, Respondent.	)	**DECISION AND ORDER**
Krista Thom, Complainant.	)	

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STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

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(2). 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, Titlemax, 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 2011 January 10th CD filed on January 10, 2011for the November 2, 2010 general election, revealed that on October 25, 2010 Respondent disclosed a campaign contribution from Titlemax, designated for runoff debt, in the amount of $3,500.00.

3. A review of Respondent's 2011 January 10th CD amendment 2, filed on March 22, 2013 for the November 2, 2010 general election, revealed that on December 1, 2010 Respondent disclosed a campaign contribution from Titlemax, designated for runoff debt, in the amount of $3,500.00. A review of Respondent's original 2011 January 10th CD filed on January 10, 2011 and Respondent's amended 2011 January 10th CD filed on July 8, 2011, revealed that Respondent did not document the December 1, 2010 campaign contribution.

4. A review of Respondent's CDs revealed that between October 25, 2010 and December 1, 2010 Respondent received contributions from Titlemax designated for runoff debt in the amount of $7,000.00.

5. According to Respondent's written response, Respondent denies any violation because the alleged excess contribution was used for the payment of runoff debt. Respondent reports that the amendments were made prior to being served with the complaint. Respondent's attorney was personally served with the complaint on March 18, 2014. A review of the Respondent's 2011 January 10th CD amendment 5 filed on March 17, 2013, revealed two contributions from Titlemax, a December 1, 2010 campaign contribution in the amount of $3,500.00 and a October 25, 2010 contribution in the amount of $3,500.00 for runoff debt.

6. A review of Respondent's 2010 July 10th CD filed on July 15, 2010 for the June 9, 2010 primary election revealed that Respondent did have a loan balance in the amount of $82,924.98. Staff reviewed all of the contributions that Respondent attributed to the retirement of the primary or runoff debt and the contributions accepted from Titlemax did not exceed the loan balance.

7. 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 this 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(2) provides that a contribution made on or before the end of the quarter immediately following the general election is attributed to the general election.

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 24th DAY OF December, 2014.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

JAMES I. WARREN, III
CHAIRMAN

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA