STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF RICHLAND	)	BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
IN THE MATTER OF: COMPLAINT C2014-121	)	
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, Donald Coggins, 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 April 10th CD amendment 2 filed on March 22, 2013 for the November 2, 2010 general election, revealed that on January 6, 2011 Respondent disclosed a campaign contribution from Donald Coggins in the amount of $1,000.00. A review of Respondent's original 2011 April 10th CD filed on April 11, 2011 and Respondents 2011 April 10th CD amendment 1 filed on July 8, 2011, revealed that Respondent did not document the aforementioned campaign contribution.

3. A review of Respondent's 2013 January 10th CD filed on January 10, 2013 for the June 10, 2014 primary election, revealed that on November 15, 2012 Respondent disclosed a campaign contribution from Donald Coggins in the amount of $3,500.00.

4. A review of Respondent's CDs revealed that between January 6, 2011 and November 15, 2012, Respondent received contributions from Donald Coggins in the amount of $4,500.00.

5. According to Respondent's written response, the alleged excess contribution received was received "on or before the end of the quarter immediately following (the 2010) general election…", therefore, the "contribution is not included with latter received contributions, and are not excessive contributions".

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 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(2). 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