BEFORE THE
SOUTH CAROLINA STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

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STATE ETHICS
COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF:	)	
	)	
Complaint C2014-033	)	
	)	
SOUTH CAROLINA STATE ETHICS COMMISSION,	)	
	)	
Complainant,	)	**ORDER OF DISMISSAL**
	)	
vs.	)	
	)	
THE HONORABLE RICHARD A. ECKSTROM,	)	
	)	
Respondent.	)	

This matter is pending before the State Ethics Commission ("Commission") by virtue of a complaint filed on September 10, 2013, by the Executive Director of the Commission. The complaint alleges Respondent used campaign funds for personal expenses, resulting in a violation of S.C. Code Ann. § 8-13-1348(A).

On January 6, 2014, Respondent, through his counsel, moved to dismiss the complaint asserting that the expenses reflected the payment of reasonable and necessary travel expenses, food, and beverages consumed by Respondent while at and in connection with the 2012 Republican National Convention. Accordingly, Respondent contends S.C. Code Ann. § 8-13-1348(B) specifically permits the use of campaign funds to defray these expenses.

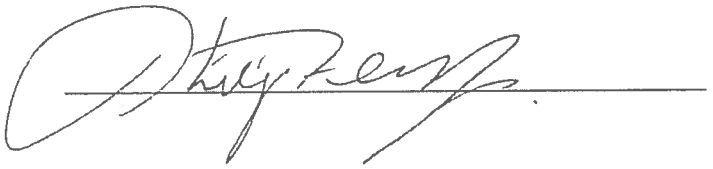
Argument on Respondent's motion was heard by the Commission on Wednesday, March 19, 2014. Appearing for Respondent were Mitchell Willoughby, Esquire and Benjamin P. Mustian, Esquire of the law firm of Willoughby & Hoefer, P.A., and appearing for the Commission Staff was Cathy Hazelwood, General Counsel and Deputy Director of the

Commission. After carefully considering argument of counsel and reviewing the written submissions, the Commission concludes that the facts alleged in the Complaint do not constitute a violation of the South Carolina Ethics Act, S.C. Code Ann. 8-13-100 *et seq.*, and that Respondent did not convert campaign funds to his own personal use in violation of S.C. Code Ann. § 8-13-1348(A). Accordingly, Respondent's Motion to Dismiss is granted.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Complaint C2014-033 is dismissed.

IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 21st DAY OF MARCH, 2014.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION



Columbia, South Carolina