

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
RECEIVED JUN 7 '22 PM 1:31:51

FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:
CASE NUMBER
C 2022-060

COMPLAINT FORM

COMPLAINANT: State Ethics Commission
ADDRESS: 201 Executive Center Drive
Suite 150
Columbia, SC 29210
TELEPHONE NUMBER: (803) 253-4192

RESPONDENT: William C. Smith
ADDRESS: P.O. Box 1538
St. Helena Island, SC 29920
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]
TITLE: Trustee – Beaufort County School Board
District 3

Section 8-13-1140, SC Code Ann., 1976, as amended, requires the filing of an updated Statement of Economic Interests for the previous calendar year annually thereafter prior to March 30. Records in the State Ethics Commission indicate that the Respondent was required to file the 2020, 2021, and 2022 Statement of Economic Interests.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirements by a certified letter dated January 24, 2022 as described in the attached. In addition, an email reminder was sent thirty days prior to the deadline. To date, no properly completed 2020, 2021, or 2022 Statement of Economic Interests has been received. All in violation of Section 8-13-1140, SC Code Ann., 1976, as amended.

If there is a finding of probable cause, the following documents become public record: the complaint, the response (if any) by respondent, and the notice of hearing. If a hearing is to be held, the final order and all exhibits become public record. If no hearing is held following a finding of probable cause, the final disposition of the matter becomes public record.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF Richland

Personally appeared before me Meghan L. Walker who, first being duly sworn, says that she has read and knows the contents of the above complaint and that the allegations contained therein, are true and correct to the best of her own knowledge, except for those matters therein based upon information and belief, and as to those she believes them to be true.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 7th day of June, 2022

[REDACTED]
Meghan L. Walker, Executive Director

[REDACTED]
Notary Public for South Carolina
My Commission expires 01/22/26

SEC-7 (Revised 3/2022)

REPLY TO: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210 (803)253-4192
ELECTRONIC COPIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

C102form

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)	
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)	BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
)	
IN THE MATTER OF:)	
)	
Complaint C2022-060)	
)	
William C. Smith)	NOTICE OF HEARING
Respondent.)	
)	
State Ethics Commission)	
Complainant.)	
)	

The State Ethics Commission has determined that there is probable cause pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, to support the allegations made in the above-captioned complaint. The Commission will convene a formal hearing into the matter in accordance with Section 8-13-320(10)(i) & (j), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, and State Ethics Commission Regulations, S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 52-707 (1997 Cum. Supp.) on Thursday, June 15, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. at the Commission Hearing Room located at: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210.

The following allegations will be heard:

COUNT ONE
FAILURE TO FILE STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1140, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That William C. Smith, Beaufort County School District Board Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2020 Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Section 8-13-1140.

COUNT TWO
FAILURE TO FILE STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1140, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

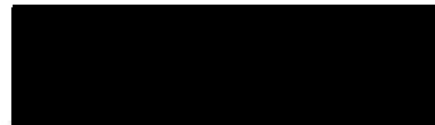
That William C. Smith, Beaufort County School District Board Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2021 Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Section 8-13-1140.

COUNT THREE
FAILURE TO FILE STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1140, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That William C. Smith, Beaufort County School District Board Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2022 Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Section 8-13-1140.

You have the right to be represented by counsel, the right to call and examine witnesses, the right to introduce exhibits, and the right to cross-examine opposing witnesses. This hearing will be open to the public as required by Section 8-13-320(10)(j), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended. The procedures to be followed are set forth in the Administrative Procedures Act, Section 1-23-10, et seq., Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976 as amended the State Ethics Act, Section 8-13-100, et seq., Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, and State Ethics Commission Regulations, S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 52-707 (1997 Cum. Supp.).

A pre-hearing conference may be scheduled prior to the hearing to allow exchange of witness lists and evidence, marking of exhibits, and disposition of motions or pleadings. In the event you fail to appear, judgment by default will be rendered against you. If there are any questions concerning the above notice or hearing times, please contact the State Ethics Commission.



Meghan L. Walker, Executive Director
State Ethics Commission

Dated this 19th day,
of January 2023.

Certificate of Service by Certified Mail

I hereby certify that a copy of this **NOTICE OF HEARING** was duly served on the RESPONDENT William C. Smith, PO Box 15538, St. Helena Island, SC 29920 by depositing said **NOTICE OF HEARING** in the United States mail, Columbia, South Carolina on this 20th day of January 2023, by **CERTIFIED MAIL, E-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**, appropriate postage affixed, and a return address clearly indicated on said envelope.



Columbia, South Carolina

Rachael O'Bryan, Administrative Assistant
State Ethics Commission (803) 253-4192

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)	
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)	BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
)	
IN THE MATTER OF:)	
)	
Complaint C2022-060)	
)	
William C. Smith)	AMENDED
Respondent.)	NOTICE OF HEARING
)	
State Ethics Commission)	
Complainant.)	
_____)	

The State Ethics Commission has determined that there is probable cause pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, to support the allegations made in the above-captioned complaint. The Commission will convene a formal hearing into the matter in accordance with Section 8-13-320(10)(i) & (j), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, and State Ethics Commission Regulations, S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 52-707 (1997 Cum. Supp.) on Thursday, October 19, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. at the Commission Hearing Room located at: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210.

The following allegations will be heard:

COUNT ONE
FAILURE TO FILE STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1140, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That William C. Smith, Beaufort County School District Board Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2020 Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Section 8-13-1140.

COUNT TWO
FAILURE TO FILE STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1140, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

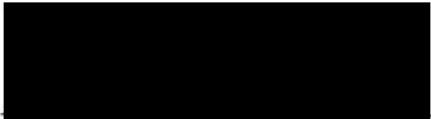
That William C. Smith, Beaufort County School District Board Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2021 Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Section 8-13-1140.

COUNT THREE
FAILURE TO FILE STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1140, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That William C. Smith, Beaufort County School District Board Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2022 Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Section 8-13-1140.

You have the right to be represented by counsel, the right to call and examine witnesses, the right to introduce exhibits, and the right to cross-examine opposing witnesses. This hearing will be open to the public as required by Section 8-13-320(10)(j), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended. The procedures to be followed are set forth in the Administrative Procedures Act, Section 1-23-10, et seq., Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976 as amended the State Ethics Act, Section 8-13-100, et seq., Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, and State Ethics Commission Regulations, S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 52-707 (1997 Cum. Supp.).

A pre-hearing conference may be scheduled prior to the hearing to allow exchange of witness lists and evidence, marking of exhibits, and disposition of motions or pleadings. In the event you fail to appear, judgment by default will be rendered against you. If there are any questions concerning the above notice or hearing times, please contact the State Ethics Commission.


Meghan L. Walker, Executive Director
State Ethics Commission

Dated this 12th day,
of June 2023.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
IN THE MATTER OF:)
COMPLAINT C2022-060)
State Ethics Commission,)
Complainant.)
William C. Smith,)
Respondent.)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

DECISION AND ORDER

This matter comes before the State Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a complaint filed on June 7, 2022. Pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i) of the South Carolina Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act of 1991 (Ethics Act), the Commission reviewed the above-captioned complaint against William C. Smith (Respondent) and probable cause was found to warrant an evidentiary hearing. Present at the hearing on February 15, 2024, were Commissioners Matthew N. Tyler, Mary Hunter B. Tomlinson, and Neal D. Truslow, Hearing Chair. Respondent was duly notified but did not appear. Complainant was represented by Renique Brabham. The following charges were considered:

COUNT ONE
FAILURE TO FILE STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1140, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That William C. Smith, Beaufort County School District Board Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2020 Statement of Economic Interests (SEI), in violation of Section 8-13-1140.

COUNT TWO
FAILURE TO FILE STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1140, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That William C. Smith, Beaufort County School District Board Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2021 [SEI], in violation of Section 8-13-1140.

NDT

COUNT THREE
FAILURE TO FILE STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1140, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That William C. Smith, Beaufort County School District Board Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2022 [SEI], in violation of Section 8-13-1140.

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. At all times relevant, Respondent has served on Beaufort County School District Board of Trustees.
2. Respondent did not file an annual SEI on or before March 30 in 2020 or 2021.
3. In a January 24, 2022 certified letter, the Commission notified Respondent of his failure to file the 2020 and 2021 SEIs.
4. According to the United States Postal Service, the certified letter was delivered to Respondent's address of record on February 10, 2022 at 11:26 a.m.
5. On February 20, 2022, late-filing penalties began to accrue at \$20.00 per day (\$10.00 per SEI).
6. On March 2, 2022, late-filing penalties began to accrue at \$200.00 per day (\$100.00 per SEI).
7. Respondent failed to file a 2022 SEI on or before March 30, 2022.
8. As of the date of the Panel hearing, Respondent had not filed his 2020, 2021, or 2022 SEIs.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based upon the Findings of Fact, the Commission concludes, as a matter of law:

1. At all times relevant, Respondent was a public official pursuant to Section 8-13-100(27) of the Ethics Act. Therefore, the Commission has personal and subject matter jurisdiction.
2. Section 8-13-1140 provides, in relevant part:

A person required to file a [SEI] under this chapter annually shall file, pursuant to Section 8-13-365, an updated statement for the previous calendar year, no later than

NDT

noon on March thirtieth of each calendar year . . .

3. Section 8-13-1510(A) of the Ethics Act provides, in part:

. . . a person required to file a report or statement under this chapter who files a late statement or report or fails to file a required statement or report must be assessed a civil penalty as follows: (1) a fine of one hundred dollars if the statement or report is not filed within five days after the established deadline provided by law in this chapter; and (2) after notice has been given by certified or registered mail that a required statement or report has not been filed, a fine of ten dollars per calendar day for the first ten days after notice has been given, and one hundred dollars for each calendar day in which the required statement or report is not filed, not exceeding five thousand dollars.

6. Section 8-13-130 of the Ethics Act allows the Commission to levy an administrative fee on any person who is found in violation of the Ethics Act.

DECISION

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Panel has determined, based on a preponderance of evidence, that Respondent, William C. Smith, is in violation of three (3) counts of Section 8-13-1140 for failing to timely file his 2020, 2021, and 2022 SEIs.

THEREFORE, Respondent is hereby Publicly Reprimanded and assessed a late-filing penalty of \$10,100.00 and an administrative fee of \$1,100.00, for a total of \$11,200.00. The Panel notes that while Respondent accrued the maximum statutory late-filing penalty of \$5,000.00 with regard to the 2020 and 2021 SEIs, Respondent's late-filing penalty is limited to \$100.00 with regard to the 2022 SEI because he did not receive certified notice of his failure to file with regard to this SEI pursuant to Section 8-13-1510(A)(2).


FURTHER, pursuant to Section 8-13-320 of the Ethics Act, if the \$11,200.00 is not paid within ninety (90) days from Respondent's receipt of this Order, a judgment in the amount of \$11,200.00 shall be entered against Respondent. In the event of a failure to pay, upon the Commission's filing of said Judgment with the Clerk of Court in the County of Respondent's last

known residence, the Clerk of Court shall enter this Order in the amount of \$11,200.00, less any money paid, in its Judgment Rolls, without cost to the Commission.

FINALLY, Respondent William C. Smith has ten (10) days from receipt of this Order to appeal this Decision and Order to the full Commission.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 27 DAY OF FEBRUARY 2024.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION


NEAL D. TRUSLOW, HEARING CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

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CASE NUMBER
C 2022-060

COMPLAINT FORM

COMPLAINANT: State Ethics Commission
ADDRESS: 201 Executive Center Drive
Suite 150
Columbia, SC 29210
TELEPHONE NUMBER: (803) 253-4192

RESPONDENT: William C. Smith
ADDRESS: P.O. Box 1538
St. Helena Island, SC 29920
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]
TITLE: Trustee – Beaufort County School Board
District 3

Section 8-13-1140, SC Code Ann., 1976, as amended, requires the filing of an updated Statement of Economic Interests for the previous calendar year annually thereafter prior to March 30. Records in the State Ethics Commission indicate that the Respondent was required to file the 2020, 2021, and 2022 Statement of Economic Interests.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirements by a certified letter dated January 24, 2022 as described in the attached. In addition, an email reminder was sent thirty days prior to the deadline. To date, no properly completed 2020, 2021, or 2022 Statement of Economic Interests has been received. All in violation of Section 8-13-1140, SC Code Ann., 1976, as amended.

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF Richland

Personally appeared before me Meghan L. Walker who, first being duly sworn, says that she has read and knows the contents of the above complaint and that the allegations contained therein, are true and correct to the best of her own knowledge, except for those matters therein based upon information and belief, and as to those she believes them to be true.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 7th day of June, 2022

[REDACTED]
Meghan L. Walker, Executive Director

[REDACTED]
Notary Public for South Carolina
My Commission expires 01/22/26

SEC-7 (Revised 3/2022)

REPLY TO: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210 (803)253-4192
ELECTRONIC COPIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

C102form

William C. Smith

January 24, 2022: \$200.00 penalty letter sent certified for failure to file a 2020 and 2021 Statement of Economic Interests

February 10, 2022: The certified letter is delivered at 11:26 a.m. according to the United States Postal Service.

February 20, 2022: Penalties begin accruing at \$20 per day for the first ten days

March 2, 2022: Penalties begin accruing at \$200 per day

June 6, 2022: After no response, complaint is filed.

Previous or Current Non-Compliance

Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure (due 3-13-17),
2016 candidate Statement of Economic Interests, and
2017 Statement of Economic Interests as a petition candidate

GEAR

Quarter 4 2018/Final Campaign Disclosure

GEAR



February 10, 2022

Dear Susan Bickley:

The following is in response to your request for proof of delivery on your item with the tracking number: **9214 8969 0099 9790 1420 9421 75.**


Item Details

Status:	Delivered, Individual Picked Up at Post Office
Status Date / Time:	February 10, 2022, 11:26 am
Location:	SAINT HELENA ISLAND, SC 29920
Postal Product:	First-Class Mail®
Extra Services:	Certified Mail™ Return Receipt Electronic
Recipient Name:	Mr William C Smith

Shipment Details

Weight: 0.0oz

Recipient Signature

Signature of Recipient:	
Address of Recipient:	PO BOX 1538 <small>SAINT HELENA ISLAND, SC 29920</small>

Note: Scanned image may reflect a different destination address due to Intended Recipient's delivery instructions on file.

Thank you for selecting the United States Postal Service® for your mailing needs. If you require additional assistance, please contact your local Post Office™ or a Postal representative at 1-800-222-1811.

Sincerely,
United States Postal Service®
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, D.C. 20260-0004

2-20-22: \$ 20/day
3-2-22: \$ 200/day

State of South Carolina State Ethics Commission

2-15
3-2

CHILDS C. THRASHER, CHAIR
DONALD GIST, VICE CHAIR
BRIAN M. BARNWELL
SCOTT E. FRICK



AJ HOLLOWAY
DON JACKSON
BRANDOLYN THOMAS PINKSTON

201 EXECUTIVE CENTER DRIVE, SUITE 150
COLUMBIA, S.C. 29210

MEGHAN L. WALKER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

January 24, 2022

Mr. William C. Smith
P.O. Box 1538
St. Helena Island, SC 29920

CERTIFIED MAIL NO.: 9214 8969 0099 9790 1420 9421 75

Feb 10 22

Dear Mr. Smith:

This is not a form letter. You are receiving this letter because you are currently in violation of the Ethics Reform Act. As a Trustee for Beaufort School District, you are subject to the Ethics Reform Act, which is the body of laws that govern public officials, public members, and public employees.

Continued delays in filing the Statement of Economic Interests will result in accrual of late filing penalties with a maximum penalty of \$10,000.00.

Please be advised that this letter only addresses late or missing reports, and you could still be subject to a random audit regarding illegal contributions and expenditures. Due to the new system migration in September 2021, you may see reports in your account that say, "System Created Report." This means you did not file them or filed them late in the old system. It might be necessary for you to add any contributions or expenditures not previously reported. This will create an amendment to your system created report. If you do not have any further contributions or expenditures to report, please send confirmation in writing. While reviewing your Campaign Disclosures and Statements of Economic Interests, the following deficiencies were discovered:

The 2020 Statement of Economic Interests, which was due on March 30, 2020, has not been filed.

The 2021 Statement of Economic Interests, which was due on March 30, 2021, has not been filed.

NR
B250P
3-4-22

In accordance with Section 8-13-1510, South Carolina Code Ann., 1976, as amended, a late filing penalty of \$200.00 is hereby levied. If the required Statement of Economic Interests are not filed electronically within ten calendar days of receipt of this letter, additional penalties will be levied at \$10 per day per report for the first ten days and \$100 per day per report for each additional day until the penalty reaches \$5,000 per report, and a complaint will be filed against you.

If extenuating circumstances prevented you from filing the reports as required, you may file a written appeal of this late filing penalty. To file an appeal, you must do the following within ten (10) days of the date you receive this letter:

- Send a personal check or money order made payable to the State Ethics Commission
- File all missing reports online at <http://ethics.sc.gov>
- Provide a written statement describing any extenuating circumstances and include any supporting documentation.

Please be advised that all appeals must be in writing and must follow the above directions. NO phone or e-mail appeals will be accepted. Failure to file is a misdemeanor. After the maximum civil penalty has been levied, this matter will be referred to Magistrate's Court for criminal prosecution. This matter will also be referred to the South Carolina Department of Revenue for collection, and the penalty amount and your name, address (city) and position will be posted on the State Ethics Commission's website. Please contact this office if we can provide further information.

Sincerely,



Ami R. Franklin
Assistant Director

ARF:sb

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U.S. Postal Service™ CERTIFIED MAIL® RECEIPT <i>Domestic Mail Only</i>	
For delivery information, visit our website at www.usps.com ™	
9214 8969 0099 9790 1420 9421 75	
Certified Mail Fee \$ \$3.75	Electronic Return Receipt Requested Postmark Here
Extra Services & Fees (check box, add fee as appropriate)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Return Receipt (hardcopy) \$	
<input type="checkbox"/> Return Receipt (electronic) \$ \$1.85	
<input type="checkbox"/> Certified Mail Restricted Delivery \$ \$0.00	
<input type="checkbox"/> Adult Signature Required \$	
<input type="checkbox"/> Adult Signature Restricted Delivery \$	
Postage \$ \$0.530	
Total Postage and Fees \$ \$6.130	
Sent To Street, Apt. No., or PO Box No. City, State, Zip+4	Mr. William C. Smith P.O. Box 1536 St. Helena Island, SC 29920
PS Form 3800, April 2015 See Reverse for Instructions	

The State Ethics Commission is experiencing a higher than normal call volume at this time. Please be patient as our team answers your calls and emails.




Statements of Economic Interests



You have a new report to complete and submit.
Deadline: March 30, 2022

Start New Report

Your SEI Reports

SEI Report	Filing for Year	Status	Submitted	Report Overview	Filed Amendments	Last Amendment
2019 Report (/filing/sei-wizard/overview?seiReportId=134207...	2018	Submitted	January 29, 2019		0	
2018 Report (/filing/sei-wizard/overview?reportId=122454...	2017	Submitted	August 15, 2018		0	
2016 Report (/filing/sei-wizard/overview?seiReportId=86108&...	2015	Submitted	April 28, 2016		0	

Contact

House Filers
(803) 734-3114

[SC House Website \(https://www.scstatehouse.gov/CommitteeInfo/houseethics.php\)](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/CommitteeInfo/houseethics.php)

Filers

(803) 212-6410

[SC Senate Website \(https://www.scstatehouse.gov/CommitteeInfo/senateethics.php\)](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/CommitteeInfo/senateethics.php)

Local and Statewide Filers

(803) 253-4192

[SC Ethics Commission Website \(https://ethics.sc.gov/\)](https://ethics.sc.gov/)

The State Ethics Commission is experiencing a higher than normal call volume at this time. Please be patient as our team answers your calls and emails.

To Date

Report 2019

Disclosing Interests for: 2018

Create PDF

Overview Positions Income Businesses Property Lobbyists Creditors Additional Information



Status: Submitted

Submitted: January 29, 2019

Any changes you make to this report now will start an amendment.

Your Details

Name

William C Smith

Mailing Address

P O Box 1538
St. Helena Island, SC 29920

Phone Number

Office Phone
8035466331

Email

db29920@yahoo.com

County

Beaufort

2019 SEI Report

Positions (/filing/sei-review/positions)

Content Added

1 position reported.

Your Income (/filing/sei-review/income)

Content Added

Private Income

1 item in report.

Income from a Government Entity

None reported

Gifts Received

None reported

Income from Speaking Engagements

None reported

Family Members' Income (/filing/sei-review/income)

Skipped

Private Income

None reported

Income from a Government Entity

None reported

Businesses (/filing/sei-review/businesses)

Skipped

Regulated Business Associations

None reported

Business Interests *None reported*

Property (/filing/sei-review/property) **Skipped**

Improvements *None reported*

Properties with Potential Conflict *None reported*

Sold or Leased *None reported*

Lobbyists (/filing/sei-review/lobbyists) **Skipped**

Lobbyist Immediate Family Member *None reported*

Lobbyists/Lobbyists' Principal Purchases *None reported*

Creditors (/filing/sei-review/creditors) **Skipped**

Creditors Associated with Government Agency *None reported*

Additional Economic Interests (/filing/sei-review/additional-interests) **Skipped**

Interests Not Covered by Other Entries *None reported*

Contact

House Filers
(803) 734-3114
[SC House Website \(https://www.scstatehouse.gov/CommitteeInfo/houseethics.php\)](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/CommitteeInfo/houseethics.php)

Senate Filers
(803) 212-6410
[SC Senate Website \(https://www.scstatehouse.gov/CommitteeInfo/senateethics.php\)](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/CommitteeInfo/senateethics.php)

Local and Statewide Filers
(803) 253-4192
[SC Ethics Commission Website \(https://ethics.sc.gov/\)](https://ethics.sc.gov/)

Ethics Guidelines

[Candidates \(https://ethics.sc.gov/campaigns\)](https://ethics.sc.gov/campaigns)
[Employees \(https://ethics.sc.gov/statement-economic-interests\)](https://ethics.sc.gov/statement-economic-interests)
[Accessibility \(https://sc.gov/accessibility-policy\)](https://sc.gov/accessibility-policy)

Help

[Online Filing Help \(/filing/help\)](/filing/help)
[Training Videos \(/filing/videos\)](/filing/videos)
[Terms & Conditions \(/filing/terms-and-conditions\)](/filing/terms-and-conditions)
[Contact Us \(/filing/contact-us\)](/filing/contact-us)





EMPLOYEES



William Smith
District 3
164 Ball Park Road
St. Helena Island, SC 29920
(843) 441-4993
William.smith2@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Term Ending 2022



Tricia Fidrych
District 4
1016 12th Street
Port Royal, SC 29935
(843) 812-4410
Patricia.fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Term Ending 2022



Richard Geier
District 5
32 Petigru Dr.
Beaufort, SC 29902
(843) 441-6683
Richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Term Ending 2022



Rachel Wisnefski
District 7
129 Planters Row Ct.
Bluffton, SC 29910
(843) 941-9535
rachel.wisnefski@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Term Ending: 2022

Christina Gwozdz
District 9
77 Gascoigne Bluff Rd.
Bluffton, SC 29910

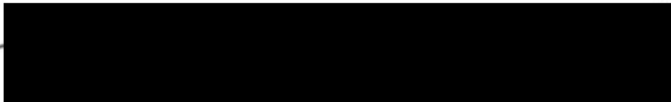


COUNTY OF: Richland)
)
 IN THE MATTER OF:)
)
 COMPLAINT C2022-060)
)
State Ethics Commission, Complainant,)
)
 vs.)
)
William C. Smith, Respondent.)
 _____)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

AFFIDAVIT OF PERSONAL SERVICE

PERSONALLY comes the undersigned, who says on oath that on the 3rd day of October 2023, he served the 2nd Amended Notice of Hearing on William C. Smith, by delivering unto William C. Smith personally copies thereof and leaving the same with him while at 2900 Mink Point Boulevard, Beaufort, South Carolina, 29902 and that the deponent is not a party to this action.



Thomas C. Yeager, Investigator
 State Ethics Commission

SWORN to before me this 4th
 day of October, 2023



(RO)

Notary Public for South Carolina
 My Commission Expires 01/22/26

State of South Carolina

State Ethics Commission

SCOTT E. FRICK, CHAIRMAN
F. XAVIER STARKES, VICE CHAIRMAN
BRYANT S. CALDWELL
AJ HOLLOWAY



BRANDOLYN THOMAS PINKSTON
MARY HUNTER B. TOMLINSON
NEAL D. TRUSLOW
MATTHEW N. TYLER

201 EXECUTIVE CENTER DRIVE, SUITE 150
COLUMBIA, S.C. 29210

MEGHAN WALKER DAYSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

October 3, 2023

Mr. William C. Smith
Hand Delivered

RE: Complaint C2022-060

In the Matter of William C. Smith

Dear Mr. Smith:

The State Ethics Commission has considered the above captioned complaint and has determined that probable cause exists to support the alleged violation. As a result of the Commission's determination, you are hereby provided with the Second Amended Notice of Hearing. In accordance with 8-13-320 (10)(g), South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, as amended, all complaint matters are now public upon the issuance of the Notice of Hearing.


Please be aware that under recent General Assembly amendments to the Ethics Reform Act in 2016 Act. No. 282, effective April 1, 2017, this and all other Ethics Commission hearings are now open to the public. The Ethics Commission will provide timely notice of Commission hearings to the public pursuant to the requirement of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. Section 1-23-320(F), in lieu of a hearing, the Commission may be agreeable to resolve this matter through an informal disposition by Consent Order. Please contact Courtney M. Laster, Esq., General Counsel, at 803-253-4192 or claster@ethics.sc.gov as soon as possible to:

- Confirm receipt of this Second Amended Notice of Hearing and notify the Commission whether you will or will not attend the scheduled hearing at **9:30 am, Thursday, February 15, 2024 at the State Ethics Commission Hearing Room located at: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150 Columbia, SC 29210.**
- Confirm address, telephone number and email address.
- Notify the Commission if an attorney will be representing you.
- Discuss the option of a Consent Order

If you do not attend the hearing, a judgment by default will be rendered.

Sincerely,


Meghan Walker Dayson
Executive Director

MWD:ro
Enclosure: Second Amended Notice of Hearing

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)	
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)	BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
)	
IN THE MATTER OF:)	
)	
Complaint C2022-060)	
)	
William C. Smith)	SECOND AMENDED
Respondent.)	NOTICE OF HEARING
)	
State Ethics Commission)	
Complainant.)	
)	

The State Ethics Commission has determined that there is probable cause pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, in the above-captioned complaint. The Commission will convene a formal hearing into the matter in accordance with Section 8-13-320(10)(i) & (j), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, and State Ethics Commission Regulations, S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 52-707 (1997 Cum. Supp.) on Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. at the Commission Hearing Room located at: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210.

The following allegations will be heard:

COUNT ONE
FAILURE TO FILE STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1140, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That William C. Smith, Beaufort County School District Board Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2020 Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Section 8-13-1140.

COUNT TWO
FAILURE TO FILE STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1140, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That William C. Smith, Beaufort County School District Board Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2021 Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Section 8-13-1140.

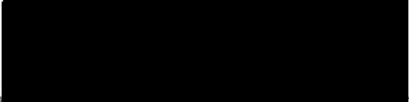
COUNT THREE
FAILURE TO FILE STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1140, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That William C. Smith, Beaufort County School District Board Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2022 Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Section 8-13-1140.

You have the right to be represented by counsel, the right to call and examine witnesses, the right to introduce exhibits, and the right to cross-examine opposing witnesses. This hearing will be open to the public as required by Section 8-13-320(10)(j), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended. The procedures to be followed are set forth in the Administrative Procedures Act, Section 1-23-10, et seq., Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976 as amended the State Ethics Act, Section 8-13-100, et seq., Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, and State Ethics Commission Regulations, S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 52-707 (1997 Cum. Supp.).

A pre-hearing conference may be scheduled prior to the hearing to allow exchange of witness lists and evidence, marking of exhibits, and disposition of motions or pleadings. In the event you fail to appear, judgment by default will be rendered against you. If there are any questions concerning the above notice or hearing times, please contact the State Ethics Commission.

Dated this 14th day,
of September 2023.


Moghan Walker Dayson, Executive Director
State Ethics Commission

NOTICE OF APPEAL
THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Appeal from the State Ethics Commission Panel

Commissioners Mathew N. Tyler, Mary Hunter B. Tomlinson, and Neal D. Truslow

Case No. C20022-060

State Ethics Commission, Respondent

v.

William C. Smith, Appellant

NOTICE OF APPEAL

William C. Smith appeals the Decision and Order of the Honorable Neal D. Truslow dated February 27, 2024. Appellant received written notice of entry of this order by hand delivery on April 4, 2024.

At all times from before January 24, 2022, to present Appellant has been represented by Maureen T. Coffey, Esq., formerly of Coffey Kubec, LLP and presently with Coffey Law, LLC and Edward M. Kubec, Esq., also formerly of Coffey Kubec, LLP and presently with Novit and Scarminach, PA.

For a first ground, the Decision and Order of February 27, 2024, should be set aside as the Decision and Order was rendered as a Default Order. Appellant's counsels were not aware of the June 7, 2022, Complaint and subsequent Notices and Hearing. In addition, Appellant had erroneously thought that he had complied with the Ethics Commission requirements by filling out the form telephonically, not understanding that the Forms are required to be filed electronically, which led him to erroneously believe that his presence was not necessary at the hearing. Had Appellant's counsel been notified, they would have been able to rectify the defect in short shrift, as exemplified by the quick filing of Appellant's SEI forms upon receiving Appellant's Notice of Decision and Order or at the very least appeared and explained the unusual situation Appellant was in.

For a second ground, Appellant needed to be given *Faretta Warnings* which he was not. Pursuant to SC Code §2-17-50, The State Ethics Commission shall enforce filing requirements and to assess civil or **criminal penalties** for failure to file. Subsection (B) specifically states that after the maximum civil penalty has been levied and there is still noncompliance... the person is liable for criminal penalties of a fine of not more than five thousand dollars or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both. So, an individual should be entitled to counsel at the initial proceeding because it could lead to criminal penalties and incarceration for up to a year. This matter should not have been heard with an absent Respondent and certainly not without Respondent being verbally and in writing apprised of his constitutional rights via *Farretta*.

For a third Ground, the further collateral consequences/penalties of the Decision and Order are far greater than contemplated by Statute. As noted above there are civil penalties and fines and even criminal penalties, however, removal from office, which is a likely result, was not a contemplated penalty. Further, Appellant has been the victim of harassment, discrimination and defamation going back to 2019. The lawsuit filed on his behalf by undersigned counsel in 2021 addresses the above claims as well as intentional infliction of emotional distress by his fellow board members. All of this contributed to Appellant's lack of addressing the Ethics Financial Compliance issue.

For a fourth and last ground, the SEI as far as it relates to School Board Members is ineffective. Its stated purpose is to aim for transparency on any potential personal benefit that a public position could create. It is rare that a school board member has campaign contributions. In fact, after viewing the Beaufort County School Board Members SEI filings for the last ten years, the vast majority only claim their Board Stipend. Occasionally, someone will put their personal income in general terms. This offers the public absolutely nothing. As this regulation no longer serves its intended purpose, this filing requirement should be eliminated at least with respect to elected School Board Members.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maureen T. Coffey, Esq.

Maureen T. Coffey, Esq.

SC Bar #5918

217 Goethe Rd., Ste. B

Bluffton, SC 29910

843.304.2056

maureen@coffey-law.com

April 11, 2024

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
IN THE MATTER OF:)
COMPLAINT C2022-060)
William C. Smith,)
Appellant.)
State Ethics Commission,)
Respondent.)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

**ORDER GRANTING
APPELLANT'S MOTION FOR
CONTINUANCE**

The above-captioned matter was scheduled for a July 18, 2024 appellate hearing. Prior to the call of the matter, Respondent's attorney Maureen T. Coffey filed a Motion for Continuance of the appellate hearing (Motion), citing medical issues and the need for additional time to prepare materials. At the call of the case on July 18, 2024, Commission staff had no objection to the Motion. Coffey appeared via Zoom. The Commission hereby grants Respondent's request for a continuance.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 15th DAY OF August 2024.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION


SCOTT E. FRICK
APPELLATE PANEL CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
IN THE MATTER OF:)
Complaint C2022-060)
State Ethics Commission,)
APPELLATE.)
William C. Smith,)
APPELLANT.)
_____)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

**AMENDED
NOTICE OF APPELLATE HEARING**

Maureen T. Coffey served a Notice of Appeal on the State Ethics Commission on April 15, 2024. The State Ethics Commission will, therefore, convene a formal appellate hearing into the matter, in accordance with State Ethics Commission Regulations, 52 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 802 (2013 Cum. Supp.) on September 19, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. at the State Ethics Commission Hearing Room located at: 201 Executive Center Drive Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210.

Pursuant to 52 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 803, the Appellant shall file any additional briefs within ten (10) days of the date of service of this notice. In the event the Appellant fails to appear, he will have waived his hearing and judgment will stand.



Meghan Walker Dayson
Executive Director

Dated this 12th day,
of August 2024.

Certificate of Service by Certified Mail

I hereby certify that a copy of this **AMENDED NOTICE OF APPELLATE HEARING** was duly served on the Respondent's Attorney Maureen T. Coffey, 217 Goethe Rd., Ste. B, Bluffton, SC 29910 by depositing said **AMENDED NOTICE OF APPELLATE HEARING** in the United States mail, Columbia, South Carolina on this 12th day of August 2024, by **CERTIFIED MAIL, E-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**, appropriate postage affixed, and a return address clearly indicated on said envelope.



Rachael O'Bryan, Administrative Assistant
State Ethics Commission

Columbia, South Carolina

(803) 253-4192

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
IN THE MATTER OF:)
Complaint C2022-060)
State Ethics Commission,)
APPELLATE.)
William C. Smith,)
APPELLANT.)
_____)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

**SECOND AMENDED
NOTICE OF APPELLATE HEARING**

Maureen T. Coffey served a Notice of Appeal on the State Ethics Commission on April 15, 2024. The State Ethics Commission will, therefore, convene a formal appellate hearing into the matter, in accordance with State Ethics Commission Regulations, 52 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 802 (2013 Cum. Supp.) on March 20, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. at the State Ethics Commission Hearing Room located at: 201 Executive Center Drive Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210.

Pursuant to 52 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 803, the Appellant shall file any additional briefs within ten (10) days of the date of service of this notice. In the event the Appellant fails to appear, he will have waived his hearing and judgment will stand.



Meghan Walker Dayson
Executive Director

Dated this 17th day,
of October 2024.

Certificate of Service by E-Mail

I hereby certify that a copy of this **SECOND AMENDED NOTICE OF APPELLATE HEARING** was duly served on the Respondent's Attorney Maureen T. Coffey, by e-mailing Maureen@coffey-law.com said **SECOND AMENDED NOTICE OF APPELLATE HEARING** on this 11th day of October 2024.



Rachael O'Bryan, Administrative Assistant
State Ethics Commission

Columbia, South Carolina

(803) 253-4192

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF:)
COMPLAINT C2022-060)

William C. Smith,)
Appellant.)

**ORDER GRANTING
APPELLANT'S MOTION FOR
SECOND CONTINUANCE**

State Ethics Commission,)
Respondent.)

The above-captioned matter was scheduled for a September 19, 2024 appellate hearing. Prior to the call of the matter, Respondent's attorney Maureen T. Coffey filed a Motion for Second Continuance of the appellate hearing (Motion), citing medical issues, a trial set with Circuit Court overlapping the appellate hearing date, and the need for additional time to prepare materials. Given the reasons cited in the Motion, Commission staff has no objection. The Commission hereby grants Respondent's request for a second continuance.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 19th DAY OF September 2024.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION



SCOTT E. FRICK
APPELLATE PANEL CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)

IN THE MATTER OF:)

Complaint C2022-060)

State Ethics Commission,)

v.)

William C. Smith,)
Appellant.)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

APPEAL ORDER

This matter comes before the State Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of an Appeal filed by William C. Smith (Appellant) to appeal the Decision and Order (Decision) of the Commission Hearing Panel (Hearing Panel) issued February 15, 2024. Present at the Appellate Hearing held on March 20, 2025, were Commissioners F. Xavier Starkes (Appellate Panel Chair), AJ Holloway, Brandolyn T. Pinkston, Bryant S. Caldwell, and Scott E. Frick.¹ Appellant was represented by Maureen Coffey, Esq., and the Commission was represented by Courtney Laster, Esq.

FACTS

On February 15, 2024, pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i) of the South Carolina Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act (Act), the Hearing Panel received testimony in Complaint C2022-060 charging Appellant with three (3) counts of violating Section 8-13-1140 for failing to timely file his 2020, 2021, and 2022 Statements of Economic Interests (SEI). Ultimately, the Hearing Panel found Appellant in violation of all three (3) counts and assessed a late-filing penalty of \$10,100.00 and an administrative fee of \$1,100.00, for a total of

¹ Commissioners Pinkston and Caldwell appeared virtually. Pursuant to S.C. Code Regs. Ann. 52-805, Commissioners Matthew N. Tyler, Mary Hunter B. Tomlinson, and Neal D. Truslow did not participate because they served on the original Hearing Panel.



\$11,200.00. The Hearing Panel ordered that if this amount was not paid to the Commission within ninety (90) days, a judgment would be filed against Respondent in the amount of \$11,200.00, less any money paid by Respondent. Appellant timely filed a request for an appeal.

The Appellant now asks the Appellate Panel for a reduction of the assessed penalties and fees, stating he finds it difficult to keep up with the filing requirements, particularly in light of recent events related to his public service.² Appellant acknowledges that he failed to timely file the aforementioned SEIs and asks that the amount assessed be reduced given his current financial status.

DECISION

NOW, based on the information presented by the Appellant, the Appellate Panel affirms the Hearing Panel's Decision as to liability and responsibility but reduces the late-filing penalty to \$3,000.00, making the total amount owed to the Commission \$4,100.00 (to include the previously assessed administrative fee of \$1,100.00). Moreover, the Commission extends the time to pay the penalty to eighteen (18) months from the date of Appellant's receipt of this Order.

Pursuant to Section 8-13-320 of the Act, if the reduced amount of \$4,100.00 is not paid within eighteen (18) months, the amount shall revert to \$11,200.00, the original amount imposed, and a judgment in the amount of \$11,200.00 shall be entered against Appellant. In the event of a failure to pay, upon the Commission's filing of said judgment with the Clerk of Court in

² In Appellant's Notice of Appeal, he argued Section 8-13-1110, requiring school board members to file an annual SEI, is ineffective and "should be eliminated at least with respect to elected School Board Members." However, the Commission has no authority to eliminate a provision of the Ethics Act. Appellant's Notice of Appeal also argued that the Commission should have administered a warning to Respondent pursuant to Faretta v. California, 422 U.S. 806 (1975), a U.S. Supreme Court case which held that a criminal defendant has a right to self-representation as long as the court ensures that his request is made knowingly and voluntarily. The Commission finds this argument without merit because Faretta applies only to criminal proceedings and not administrative proceedings such as those conducted by the Commission.

JX #2

Appellant's last known County of residence, the Clerk of Court shall enter this Order in the amount of \$11,200.00 in its Judgment Rolls, less any monies paid, without cost to the Commission.

FINALLY, in accordance with Section 8-13-320(10)(m), this review is the final disposition of this matter before the Commission.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 26th DAY OF March 2025.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION


F. XAVIER STARKES, CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina