

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:
CASE NUMBER
C 2021-085

COMPLAINT FORM

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

RESPONDENT: Morgan B. Reeves
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]
TITLE: Candidate - Governor

Section 8-13-1356 (A), SC Code Ann., 1976, as amended, requires a candidate, who files a statement of intention of candidacy seeking nomination by a political party primary or political party convention, must electronically file a Statement of Economic Interests for the preceding calendar year prior to the close of filing for the particular office. Records in the State Ethics Commission indicate that the Respondent was required to file the 2022 Statement of Economic Interests as a candidate by March 30, 2022.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirement by a certified letter dated May 6, 2022 as described in the attached. To date, a 2022 Statement of Economic Interests as a candidate has not been received. All in violation of Section 8-13-1356(A), 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
20th day of July, 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

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
IN THE MATTER OF:)
Complaint C2022-085)
Morgan B. Reeves)
Respondent.)
State Ethics Commission)
Complainant.)
_____)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

NOTICE OF HEARING

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 allegation will be heard:

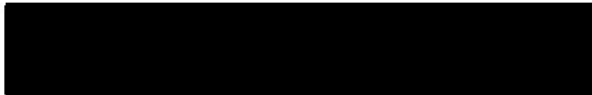
COUNT ONE
FAILURE TO FILE A STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS REPORT
SECTION 8-13-1356, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Morgan B. Reeves, gubernational candidate, did in Richland County, fail to file 2022 Statement of Economic Interests report, in violation of Section 8-13-1356.

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.

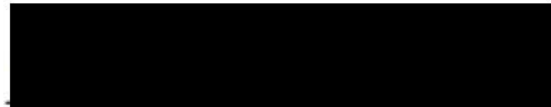


Meghan Walker Dayson, Executive Director
State Ethics Commission

Dated this 20th day,
of March 2023.

Certificate of Service by Certified Mail

I hereby certify that a copy of this **NOTICE OF HEARING** was duly served on the RESPONDENT Morgan B. Reeves, 119 Cedar Court Ext., Walterboro, SC 29180 by depositing said **NOTICE OF HEARING** in the United States mail, Columbia, South Carolina on this 20th day of March 2023, 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 C2022-085)
Morgan B. Reeves)
Respondent.)
State Ethics Commission)
Complainant.)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

**AMENDED
NOTICE OF HEARING**

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, August 17, 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 allegation will be heard:

COUNT ONE
FAILURE TO FILE A STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS REPORT
SECTION 8-13-1356, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Morgan B. Reeves, gubernational candidate, did in Richland County, fail to file 2022 Statement of Economic Interests report, in violation of Section 8-13-1356.

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 Walker Dayson, Executive Director
State Ethics Commission

Dated this 29th day,
of June 2023.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
IN THE MATTER OF:)
COMPLAINT C2022-085)
State Ethics Commission,)
Complainant.)
Morgan B. Reeves,)
Respondent.)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

DECISION AND ORDER

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 Morgan B. Reeves (Respondent) and probable cause was found to warrant an evidentiary hearing. Present at the hearing on August 17, 2023, were Commissioners Bryant S. Caldwell, Brandolyn Thomas Pinkston, and Neal D. Truslow, Hearing Chair. Respondent was duly noticed, but failed to appear. Commission was represented by Courtney M. Laster. The following charge was considered:

COUNT ONE
FAILURE TO FILE A STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS REPORT
SECTION 8-13-1356, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Morgan B. Reeves, gubernational candidate, did fail to file 2022 Statement of Economic Interests (SEI) report, in violation of Section 8-13-1356.

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. At all times relevant, Respondent was a candidate for Governor in a November 8, 2022 election.
2. March 30, 2022 was the close of filing for candidates wishing to run for Governor.
3. Respondent filed his Statement of Intention of Candidacy and Party Pledge indicating his intention to run as Governor with the Libertarian Party on March 30, 2022.
4. Respondent did not file a 2022 Statement of Economic Interests (SEI) on or before March 30, 2022.

5. In a May 6, 2022 certified letter mailed to Respondent's address of record, the Commission notified Respondent of his failure to timely file a 2022 SEI. According to the United States Postal Service, the certified letter was delivered to Respondent's address of record on May 10, 2022 at 2:26 p.m.
6. On May 20, 2022, late-filing penalties began to accrue at \$10 per day.
7. On May 30, 2022, late-filing penalties began to accrue at \$100 per day.
8. Receiving no response, the Complaint was filed on July 20, 2022.
9. Following contact from a Commission Investigator, Respondent came into compliance by filing his 2022 SEI on August 31, 2022, having accrued \$5,000 in late-filing penalties.

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 "candidate" pursuant to Section 8-13-1300(4). Therefore, the Commission has personal and subject matter jurisdiction.
2. Section 8-13-1356(A) provides:

A person who becomes a candidate by filing a statement of intention of candidacy seeking nomination by political party primary or political party convention must electronically file a statement of economic interests for the preceding calendar year pursuant to Section 8-13-365 prior to the close of filing for the particular office.

3. Section 8-13-1510(A) provides, in relevant part:

. . . a person required to file a report or statement under this chapter who files a late 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 additional calendar day in which the required statement or report is not filed, not exceeding five thousand dollars.

4. Section 8-13-130 allows the Commission to "levy an enforcement or administrative fee on a person who is 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 Morgan B. Reeves is in violation of one (1) count of 8-13-1356 for failing to file a 2022 SEI on or before March 30, 2022, which was the close of filing for gubernatorial candidates running in the November 8, 2022 election.

THEREFORE, Respondent is hereby Publicly Reprimanded and assessed a reduced late-filing penalty of \$1,000 for his failure to timely file a 2022 SEI and an administrative fee of \$850, for a total of \$1,850.

AND, pursuant to Section 8-13-320 of the Ethics Act, if the \$1,850 is not paid within eighteen (18) months from Respondent's receipt of this Order, a judgment shall be entered against Respondent in the amount of \$5,850 (the full late-filing penalty of \$5,000 and the administrative fee of \$850). In the event of a failure to pay, upon the Commission's filing of said Judgment with the Clerk of Court's Office in the County of Respondent's last known residence, the Clerk of Court shall enter this Order in the amount of \$1,850, less any money paid, in its Judgment Rolls, without cost to the Commission.

FINALLY, Respondent Morgan B. Reeves 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 29 DAY OF August 2023.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION


NEAL D. TRUSLOW, HEARING CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina

From: Morgan B Reever

To State of South Carolina

State Ethics Commission

To Courtney M Lanter

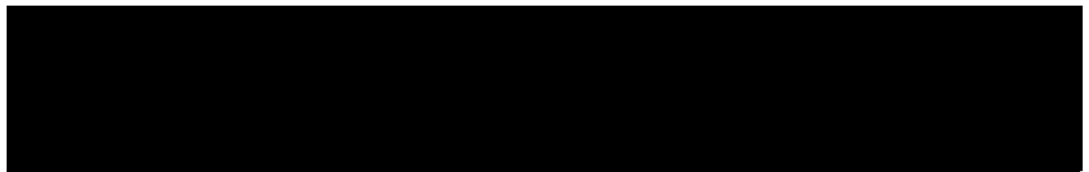
General Counsel

To who it may concern

I Appeal. your ~~complaint~~ Complaint
C2022-085

Look forward working
with you

9/20/2023 Date



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
IN THE MATTER OF:)
Complaint C2022-085)
State Ethics Commission,)
APPELLATE.)
Morgan B. Reeves,)
APPELLANT.)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

NOTICE OF APPELLATE HEARING

Morgan B. Reeves served a Motion for an Appeal on the State Ethics Commission on September 25, 2023. 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 21, 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 19th day,
of October 2023.

Certificate of Service by Certified Mail

I hereby certify that a copy of this **NOTICE OF APPELLATE HEARING** was duly served on the Respondent Morgan Reeves, 119 Cedar Court Ext., Winnsboro, SC 29180 by depositing said **NOTICE OF APPELLATE HEARING** in the United States mail, Columbia, South Carolina on this 27th day of October 2023, 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 C2022-085)
State Ethics Commission,)
Respondent.)
Morgan B. Reeves,)
Appellant.)
_____)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

APPEAL ORDER

This matter comes before the State Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a Request for an Appeal filed by Morgan B. Reeves (Appellant) to appeal the Decision and Order (Decision) of the Commission Hearing Panel (Hearing Panel). Present at the Appeal Hearing held on May 16, 2024, were Commissioners Scott E. Frick, F. Xavier Starkes, AJ Holloway, and Matthew N. Tyler.¹ Appellant appeared *pro se* and the Commission was represented by Courtney M. Laster, Esq.

FACTS

On August 17, 2023, pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i) of the South Carolina Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act (the Act), the Hearing Panel received testimony in the above-captioned complaint charging Appellant with failure to file a 2022 Statement of Economic Interests (SEI) as a candidate for Governor in violation of Section 8-13-1356. Ultimately, the Hearing Panel found Appellant in violation of Section 8-13-1356 and assessed a reduced late-filing penalty of \$1,000.00 and an administrative fee of \$850.00, for a total of \$1,850.00. The Hearing Panel ordered that this amount be paid to the Commission within eighteen (18) months or the amount owed would revert to \$5,850.00, the maximum penalty

¹ Pursuant to S.C. Code Regs. Ann. 52-805, Commissioners Brandolyn Pinkston, Neal D. Truslow, and Bryant S. Caldwell did not participate because they served on the original Hearing Panel.

permitted under the Act. Appellant timely filed a request for an appeal.

The Appellant now asks the Appellate Panel for a reduction of the assessed penalties and fees. Appellant testified at the appellate hearing, stating he is in poor health and on a fixed, limited income. Appellant does not dispute liability and admits responsibility for his failure to comply with the requirements of the Act.

DECISION

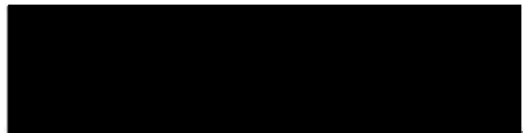
NOW, based on the information presented by the Appellant, the Appellate Panel affirms the Hearing Panel's Decision and Order and orders Respondent to pay a reduced late-filing penalty of \$500.00 and an administrative fee of \$425.00, for a total of \$925.00.

Pursuant to Section 8-13-320 of the Act, if the reduced amount of \$925.00 is not paid in full by March 3, 2025, a judgment in the maximum amount of \$5,850.00 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 Respondent's last known County of residence, the Clerk of Court shall enter this Order in the amount of \$5,850.00 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 3rd DAY OF July 2024.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION



SCOTT E. FRICK, APPELLATE PANEL
CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina