

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:  
CASE NUMBER  
C 2023-139

COMPLAINT FORM

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

RESPONDENT: Restoration Project Foundation  
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]  
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]  
TITLE: Lobbyist's Principal

In accordance with Section 2-17-35, South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, as amended, each lobbyist's principal must file disclosure statements no later than June thirtieth and January thirty-first of each year covering lobbyist payments and expenditures attributable to lobbying during that filing period.

Records of the State Ethics Commission indicate that a Lobbyist's Principal Disclosure Statement for the reporting period of January 1, 2022 through May 31, 2022 was due no later than June 30, 2022; a Lobbyist's Principal Disclosure Statement for the reporting period of June 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022 was due no later than January 31, 2023; and a Lobbyist's Principal Disclosure Statement for the reporting period of January 1, 2023 through May 31, 2023 was due no later than June 30, 2023.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirement by letters sent September 21, 2022, February 24, 2023 and May 3, 2023 as described in the attached. In addition, an email reminder was sent thirty days prior to the deadline. To date, a properly completed June 30, 2022, January 31, 2023, or June 30, 2023 Lobbyist's Principal Disclosure Statement has not been received. All in violation of Section 2-17-35, S.C. 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 Walker Dayson 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

Sworn to and subscribed before me this  
6th day of December, 2023

[REDACTED]

Meghan Walker Dayson, 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  
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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )  
 COUNTY OF RICHLAND )  
 )  
 IN THE MATTER OF: )  
 COMPLAINT C2023-139 )  
 )  
 State Ethics Commission, )  
 Complainant, )  
 )  
 Restoration Project Foundation, )  
 Respondent. )  
 \_\_\_\_\_ )

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

**CONSENT ORDER**

This matter comes before the State Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a Complaint filed on December 27, 2023. Pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i) of the South Carolina Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act (Ethics Act), the complaint against Restoration Project Foundation (Respondent) was considered by the Commission and probable cause was found to warrant an evidentiary hearing. Prior to the call of the case, Respondent agreed to the following:

**STATEMENTS OF FACT**

1. According to Respondent’s website, it is “an innovative mentor program that exists to improve the lives of young people with academic support and leadership development through strategic partnerships across South Carolina.”
2. On January 10, 2023, Respondent filed a 2023 Lobbyist’s Principal (LP) Registration.
3. Respondent failed to timely file a June 30, 2023 LP Disclosure Statement disclosing lobbying activity from January 1, 2023 through May 31, 2023.
4. On January 9, 2024, Respondent filed its June 30, 2023 LP Disclosure Statement disclosing three (3) payments to registered lobbyists totaling \$5,500.00.

**CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

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

1. At all times relevant, Respondent was a Lobbyist's Principal pursuant to Section 2-17-10(14).

Therefore, the Commission has personal and subject matter jurisdiction.

2. Section 2-17-35(A) provides, in relevant part:

Except as otherwise provided by Section 2-17-90(E), each lobbyist's principal, no later than June thirtieth and January thirty-first of each year, must file a report with the State Ethics Commission covering that lobbyist's principal's expenditures attributable to lobbying during that filing period. The filing periods are from January first to May thirty-first for the June thirtieth report, and are from June first to December thirty-first for the January thirty-first report . . .

3. Section 2-17-50(A) provides, in relevant part:

The State Ethics Commission shall (1) require a person to submit information pursuant to the requirements of this chapter; (2) in addition to any other penalty in this chapter, require a person who files a late statement or fails to file a required statement to be assessed a civil penalty as follows: (a) a fine of one hundred dollars if not filed within ten days after the established deadline provided in this chapter; and (b) after notice has been given by certified or registered mail that a required statement 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.

### **DISCUSSION**

The Commission found probable cause to charge Respondent with one (1) count of violating Section 2-17-35 for failing to timely file a June 30, 2023 LP Disclosure Statement.<sup>1</sup> In mitigation, Respondent states that it was unaware that its reports were not being filed on time until it was notified by a Commission investigator during the course of the investigation. Respondent states that it appears that the staff member responsible for handling its filings did not notify

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<sup>1</sup> The Commission also found probable cause to believe Respondent violated Section 2-17-35(A)(4) for failing to disclose the aforementioned three (3) payments made to lobbyists. Because Respondent is charged with failing to file the corresponding LP Disclosure Statement and because Respondent has disclosed these payments, the Commission declines to proceed on the violations of Section 2-17-35(A)(4).

Respondent when he received notification from the Commission. Respondent states that it has since hired a compliance officer to ensure that this issue does not occur in the future.

**DISPOSITION**

1. The Commission finds Respondent in violation of one (1) count of Section 2-17-35.
2. The Commission adopts the Statements of Fact, Conclusions of Law, Discussion, and Disposition as agreed upon by the Respondent.

THEREFORE, the Commission orders Respondent to pay the Commission, within sixty (60) days from receipt of this Order, a late-filing penalty of \$100.00<sup>2</sup> and an administrative fee of \$500.00, for a total of \$600.00.

By executing this Consent Order, Respondent understands that it is not only admitting to a violation of the Ethics Act, but also confessing to a judgment of \$600.00 in the event it does not make payment as provided for in this Order, in which case the Commission shall file a Judgment against Respondent with the County Clerk of Court in Respondent's last known County of business or residence, who shall enter this Order in the amount of \$600.00 (less any money paid) in its Judgment Rolls, without cost to the Commission.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 9<sup>th</sup> DAY OF June 2024.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

  
SCOTT E. FRICK, CHAIR

  
CRAIG WOOTEN  
RESTORATION PROJECT FOUNDATION  
RESPONDENT

<sup>2</sup> Respondent's late-filing penalty is limited to \$100.00 because it did not receive certified notice of its failure to file pursuant to Section 2-17-50(A).