



MISSOURI ETHICS COMMISSION

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Elizabeth L. Ziegler
Executive Director

Final Action: MEC No. 18-0077-I & 18-0078-I, Martin T. Rucker II, Rucker for Missouri

Date: October 1, 2018

The Missouri Ethics Commission took final consideration of two complaints filed against Martin T. Rucker II and Rucker for Missouri at its October 1, 2018 meeting.

One complaint alleged that Mr. Rucker, as vice president and board member of Northland Progress, Inc. (NPI) solicited contributions for the non-profit corporation, contributions that would require NPI to register as a campaign finance committee. The complaint also alleged that the contributions were solicited in a manner that would conceal the identity of the actual source. Further, that Mr. Rucker, in his capacity as an officer and board member of NPI, participated in the expenditure decisions of NPI that allegedly supported his candidacy and that of another candidate.

A second complaint alleged that Mr. Rucker, as a candidate, failed to report in-kind contributions from NPI in violation of the corporate contribution ban in the Missouri Constitution, Mo. Const. Art. VIII, §23.3(3)(a).

Because Mr. Rucker is a candidate in the November 2018 General Election, this Commission was required under §130.054, RSMo, to investigate the complaint filed against him within fifteen business days of receipt.

Northland Progress, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation registered with the Missouri Secretary of State since December 2016. Mr. Rucker served as vice president and a member of the board of directors until he resigned on April 25, 2018. Mr. Rucker registered a candidate committee with the Commission on January 1, 2017 in support of his candidacy for State Senate, District 34.

Mr. Rucker provided evidence that he did not solicit contributions on behalf of NPI and was not aware that NPI received contributions to support or oppose candidates, including himself.

The investigation also focused on whether Mr. Rucker and his committee coordinated expenditures with NPI, such as candidate forums allegedly in support of his candidacy, which would require him to report in-kind contributions from NPI subject to the \$2,600 contribution limit for candidates for the general assembly. While Mr. Rucker participated in the issue forums, he provided evidence that these were in fact issue forums in which local officials and candidates were invited to participate, and that he did not participate in the planning of these events. This information was confirmed by the president of NPI.

From the facts presented, the Commission found no reasonable grounds exist to support a violation of the Chapter 130, RSMo, and dismissed the complaint against the candidate and his committee.

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