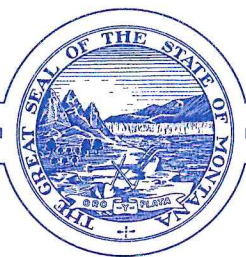


COMMISSIONER OF  
POLITICAL PRACTICES



STATE OF MONTANA

CHRIS J. GALLUS  
COMMISSIONER  
TELEPHONE (406) 444-2942  
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1209 EIGHTH AVENUE  
PO BOX 202401  
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-2401  
[www.politicalpractices.mt.gov](http://www.politicalpractices.mt.gov)

May 2, 2024

Gale Decker  
PO Box 674  
Ronan, MT 59863

Subject: Complaint received May 1, 2024; *Decker v. Baertsch*, COPP-2024-CFP-011

Gale,

I hope you are well. This letter acknowledges the receipt of the formal complaint you submitted, received by the Office of the Commissioner of Political Practices (COPP) on April 29, 2024.

The submitted complaint specifically alleges violation of Montana's 'paid for by' attribution requirements, which fall under my jurisdiction under Montana Code Annotated (MCA) Title 13, Chapter 35. I have also determined that the submitted complaint conforms to the basic requirements of 44.11.106 ARM. Basically, you have met the requirement that a written notarized complaint within the jurisdiction of COPP was delivered to the agency. Consequently, a copy of the complaint will be sent to the named respondent (Wes Baertsch), as well as a letter providing additional information about the formal complaint process and requesting a written response be provided. Please note that this office will work with respondent Baertsch and any other relevant persons to bring unattributed material into compliance in the time and manner provided under MCA § 13-35-225(5) and (6).

If an investigation is conducted, a summary of facts and statement of findings will be prepared, and a copy will be sent to you. This forms the basis as to whether the matter is going to be pursued further. If I determine prosecution is justified, the matter will be referred to the local county attorney. Any candidate, political committee, or joint fundraising committee who fails to bring unattributed material into compliance as required is subject to a civil penalty pursuant to MCA § 13-37-128.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris J. Gallus".

Chris J. Gallus  
Commissioner of Political Practices