

Mr Gallus,

Thank you for reviewing and returning my complaint.

Though I think the article I attached for your information explains our belief that Steve Gist does not live in the county where he filed for the legislative seat he now holds, I am submitting the following for your consideration.

First, I am submitting a copy of Mr Gist's Registration with your office. The salient point is that I believe that Mr Gist does not live at the address he listed in the form filed with your office. Which I believe is a violation of law enforced by your office. We allege that Gist falsely declared his residency on his declaration of candidacy filed with COPP. Specifically, we believe Mr Gist has violated 13-35-207. Which states;

13-35-207 Deceptive election practices. A person is guilty of false swearing, unsworn falsification, or tampering with public records or information, as appropriate, and is punishable as provided in [45-7-202](#), [45-7-203](#), or [45-7-208](#), as applicable, whenever the person:

- (1) falsely represents the person's name or other information required upon the person's voter registration form and causes registration with the form;
- (2) signs a voter registration form knowingly witnessing any false or misleading statement;
- (3) knowingly causes a false statement, certificate, or return of any kind to be signed;
- (4) falsely makes a declaration or certificate of nomination;
- (5) files or receives for filing a declaration or certificate of nomination knowing that all or part of the declaration or certificate is false;
- (10) makes a false oath or affidavit where an oath or affidavit is required by law.

I hope this clarifies our allegations and clarifies your jurisdiction to investigate this matter and/or make a referral to the appropriate county attorney's office. I am also including an article by WTF406 which articulates specific facts which lead to our belief that the above statute has been violated. Thank you.

Commissioner of Political Practices 1209 Eighth Avenue Post Office Box 202401 Helena, MT 59620-2401 Phone: 406-444-2942 Fax : 406-444-1643 www.politicalpractices.mt.gov

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Campaign Finance and Practices

Complaint Form (08/17)

Type or print in ink all information on this form except for verification signature

Person bringing complaint (Complainant):

Complete Name: What The Funk 406
Complete Mailing Address: PO Box 1751, Great Falls Mt 50403
Phone Numbers: Work, Home (406)231-9995

Person or organization against whom complaint is brought (Respondent):

Complete Name: Steve Gist
Complete Mailing Address: 339 1st Street N, Cascade, Mt 59421
Phone Numbers: Work (406)253-8096, Home

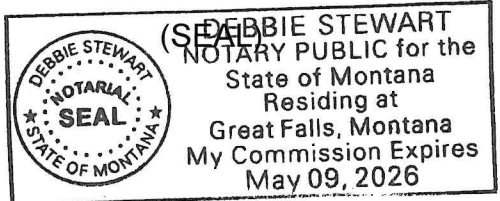
Please complete the second page of this form and describe in detail the facts of the alledged violation.

Verification by oath or affirmation

State of Montana, County of Cascade

I, Jasmine Taylor, being duly sworn, state that the information in this Complaint is complete, true, and correct, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Jasmine Taylor
Signature of Complainant



Subscribed and sworn to before me this 1 day of May, 2023, by Jasmine Taylor
Debbie Stewart
Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

Statement of facts:

Describe in detail the alleged violation(s) and cite the statute or statutes you believe have been violated. Please attach copies of documentary evidence to support the facts alleged in your statement.

If the space provided below is insufficient, you may attach additional pages as necessary.

The Montana Constitution provides:

Section 4. Qualifications. A candidate for the legislature shall be a resident of the state for at least one year next preceding the general election. For six months next preceding the general election, he shall be a resident of the county if it contains one or more districts or of the district if it contains all or parts of more than one county. The Montana Constitution

Steve Gist is currently serving as the Representative for HD 25 in Great Falls. Gist's filing with the Commissioner of Political Practices lists his residence as an address in the town of Cascade. He doesn't live in the district he represents. Nothing unusual about that. State law allows any resident of Cascade County to run in a district which is entirely within the boundaries of the county. And, it is pretty common that individuals from a given county run in districts they don't live in.

But this whole residency thing gets more complicated when you look into public records. True enough, Gist owns a couple residences in Cascade. He also owns one in Whitefish. The company he owns is a firefighting contracting company, Gist Enterprises LLC. The registered agent for that company is his spouse, Virginia Gist. The address of the company is in Whitefish. Interestingly, Steve Gist is registered to vote at his address in Cascade but has his absentee ballot sent to his Whitefish address. His wife Virginia (Ginny) is also registered to vote at the Whitefish address, and her Facebook page says she lives in Whitefish. In addition, the bank for his campaign is First Interstate Bank in Whitefish. So, let's see, his wife lives in Whitefish, his business is located in Whitefish, he has his absentee ballot sent from Cascade County to Whitefish so he can vote. But for purposes of getting elected he says he lives in Cascade County? Hmmm.

Aside from the ethical implications of skirting the law, let us tell you why this may be a bigger deal than

Complaints must be:

- **signed**
- **notarized**
- **delivered in person or by mail.**

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Aside from the ethical implications of skirting the law, let us tell you why this may be a bigger deal than you might think. Gist's business is contracting to fight forest fires. That requires equipment. And, in fact, if you go to the Gist Enterprises Facebook page, you see pictures of guys fighting fires and numerous vehicles with Gist Enterprises signs on the doors. Presumably those vehicles are registered in the county where the business is located. That would be Flathead County. So, while he represents Great Falls in the Legislature, the county share of the tax revenue from his vehicles likely flows to Flathead County. Maybe he ought to run there. After all, that is where his spouse and business are located, and he owns a nice house there.

If Gist wins the election his qualification to serve should be investigated. If it is found that he has violated the constitutional residency requirement for legislators, he should be removed from office.



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- State of Montana

Welcome

Okta Home Version

Campaign Registration View

> Statement of Candidate (C1 or C1-A)

Candidate Information

Candidate Full Name:	Gist, Steve C	Physical Address:	339 1st St. N Cascade, MT 59421
Mailing Address:	339 1st St. N Cascade, MT 59421	Alternate Phone:	
Home Phone:	(406) 231-4050	Candidate Type:	State District
Campaign Email Address:	steve@stevegistorontana.com	Resident County:	Cascade
Election Year:	2022	Current Status:	Amended
Office Sought:	House District No. 25	Amended Date:	02/01/2022
Political Party:	Republican	C118 Received Date:	
Date Filed:	01/30/2022	Bank Full Name:	First Interstate Bank
D1 Received Date:	02/01/2022	Bank Address:	PO Box 100 Whitefish, MT 59937
Reporting Status:			

Campaign Treasurer Information

Treasurer Full Name:	Gist, Virginia S	Physical Address:	339 1st St. N. Cascade, MT 59421
Mailing Address:	PO Box 541 Cascade, MT 59421	Alternate Phone:	(406) 862-8096
Home Phone:	(406) 253-8096		
Home or Personal Email Address:	gjingist@gmail.com		

Deputy Treasurer Information

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