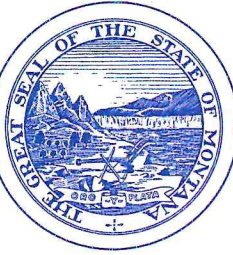


COMMISSIONER OF
POLITICAL PRACTICES



STATE OF MONTANA

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COMMISSIONER
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April 19, 2023

Andrew Rowse
65 Cedar Shade Ln
Bozeman, MT 59718

Subject: Complaint received April 18, 2023; Rowse v.
Smarter Monforton Growth, COPP-2023-CFP-003

Andrew,

I hope you are well. This letter acknowledges the receipt of your formal attribution complaint, delivered to this Office via U.S. Mail on April 18, 2023.

The complaint alleges violation of Montana's 'paid for by' attribution requirements, and I have determined that it 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 letter and copy of the complaint is being sent to the respondent listed above. Please note that, as a formal attribution complaint, this Office will contact the respondent listed above and work with them to remedy unattributed material, in the manner provided for under Mont. Code Ann. §13-35-225(5) and (6).

Please note that only listed 'Violation #1' will be addressed as part of this complaint. The specific attribution deficiencies noted in 'Violation #2' and 'Violation #3' have each been self-reported to this Office by the Smarter Monforton Growth committee. Because each attribution deficiency was self-reported by Smarter Monforton Growth and the committee continues to take steps to remedy the deficiency, I generally dismiss self-reported attribution deficiencies such as these, assuming all conditions pertaining to the remedy outlined under Mont. Code Ann. §13-35-225(6) are met, as the harm in these instances is *de minimis* and "it is not in the best interest of the state to pursue a civil penalty action"- see *In the Matter of the Fitzpatrick Complaint* (2011), as well as *Matter of Vincent Complaint COPP-2013-CFP-006*, and *Matter of Hendry Complaint COPP-2013-CFP-009* (specifically Page 5, ¶ 2). I am providing you a copy of the committee's April 18, 2023 email message self-reporting attribution deficiency on campaign postcards and campaign yard signs and detailing the committee's efforts to remedy each, which indicates the aforementioned self-reporting.

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 generally forms

the basis as to whether the matter is going to be pursued further, which then involves referring the matter to the local county attorney if the sufficiency finding supports determination of a violation of law. 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 Mont. Code Ann. §13-37-128.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris J. Gallus". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chris J. Gallus
Commissioner of Political Practices