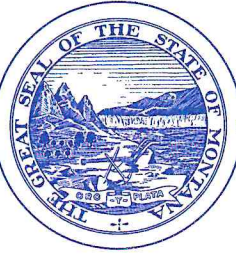


COMMISSIONER OF
POLITICAL PRACTICES



STATE OF MONTANA

CHRIS J. GALLUS
COMMISSIONER
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PO BOX 202401
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-2401
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September 9, 2024

Ed Lester
3032 Edwards St.
Butte, MT 59701

Subject: Complaint received September 9, 2024; *Lester v. Gage, COPP-2024-CFP-035*

Ed,

This letter acknowledges receipt of the formal Campaign Finance and Practices (CFP) Complaint you submitted, received by this office on September 9, 2024. This signed and sworn complaint alleges violation of Montana election law under my jurisdiction as Commissioner of Political Practices, and also appears to conform to the basic requirements of 44.11.106 ARM. Consequently, I will accept it as filed.

Pursuant to the established process, a letter and copy of the proper complaint is being sent to the named respondent, requesting that they provide a written response to this office and retain pertinent records pending further investigation of this matter.

I will review any additional materials relevant to this complaint for any deficiencies pursuant to 44.11.106 ARM, law, and prior relevant COPP rulings, and reserve the right to dismiss the complaint upon this initial inquiry. If this occurs, I will notify you and provide a basis for the dismissal. Alternatively, upon this further review, I may determine that a formal investigation is warranted. 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 involves a more extensive and time-consuming process, during which you may contact us for a status update. If violations are determined during this process, they are typically referred to the local county attorney. The local county attorney then determines whether they will prosecute the matter or refer it back to me. If returned to me, I will either work with the responding party to settle the matter or prosecute it within their local jurisdiction in district court.

Regards,

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

Chris J. Gallus
Commissioner of Political Practices