

THE STATE OF MONTANA

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

Campaign Finance and Practices

Complaint Form (08/17)

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FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Commissioner of Political Practices
2026 MAY 04
MAY 02 4
RECEIVED
HAND DELIVERED
SIGNED/NOTARIZED

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

Person bringing complaint (Complainant):

Complete Name Steve Gunderson
Complete Mailing Address 167 Skyline Road Libby, MT 59923
Phone Numbers: Work Home 406-334-4370

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

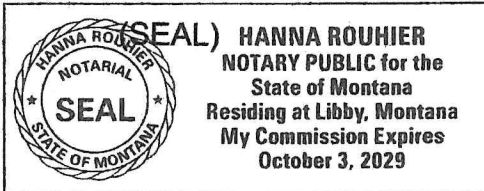
Complete Name George Vincent Backen - Vincent Backen for Montana State Senate District 1 - SD1
Complete Mailing Address 427 Thomas Libby, MT 59923
Phone Numbers: Work Home 406-200-3193

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

Verification by oath or affirmation

State of Montana, County of LINCOLN

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



Signature of Complainant

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 1st day of May, 2026.

Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

Complaint filed against candidate for Senate District 1, Vincent Backen.

As per Administrative Rules of Montana, 44.11.106 Complaints of Violations and Authorizing statute(s): 13-37-114, MCA Implementing statute(s): 13-37-111, MCA, I respectfully request that the Commissioner of Political Practices investigate the following violations, including, but not limited to:

**Violation 1. 13-35-225 Election materials not to be anonymous -- notice -- penalty.
13-37-231. Reports to be certified as true, complete, and correct.**

Prior to the date of April 15, there were many 18"x24" "Backen" campaign signs appearing around the District. There is no accounting for these signs that, due to the timing of their release, obviously were purchased and paid for by the campaign during the time period covered by the January 1 through March 15 or the March 16 through April 15 required filings. In addition, there is no contribution or expenditure tied to this purchase to show how these materials were purchased. This report was filed and certified to be true, complete and correct when in fact it was not.

**Violation 2. 13-35-225 Election materials not to be anonymous -- notice -- penalty.
13-37-231 Reports to be certified as true, complete, and correct**

On or around April 23, 4'x8' Backen campaign signs appeared in Libby. Due to printing and delivery times, it would be easy to assume this sign was purchased within the filing period covered from March 16 through April 15. There is no purchase documented in that filing. In addition, there is no contribution or expenditure tied to this purchase to show how these materials were purchased.

**Violation 3. 13-35-214 Illegal influence of voters
13-37-231 Reports to be certified as true, complete, and correct
13-35-220 Bribing members of political gatherings.**

On April 23, 2026 Mr. Backen held a "listening" session that was publicly advertised as "free beer and pizza" event. The social media (Facebook) video announcing this event did not have the proper disclaimer as it is clearly an advertisement. The event was held at Dorio's in Libby which is registered to Flowing Rivers LLC. In addition, there is no candidate contribution or in kind contribution tied to this purchase or expenditure to show how these "free" materials were purchased and/or distributed. There have been numerous and regular social media posts touting "free" items to draw potential constituents to Mr. Backen's

business which is an LLC. **See Exhibit 1-4**

Other videos touting “free” food, drink or alcohol are listed below:

Various Facebook videos with no disclaimer, offers of free pizza at Dorio’s for constituents showing up and asking a question at his business.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1AjyDZktiG/>

<https://www.facebook.com/share/r/17eHSsrp4B/>

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1279328344172918>

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1EGEbNqrFK/>

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/986664010403464>

<https://www.facebook.com/share/r/1D1rX63gV8/>

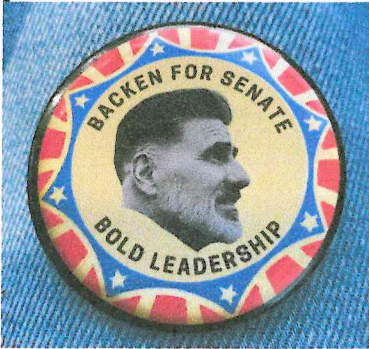
<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1DaoQueRVX/>

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1265222205146321> - Use of corporate resources Video was shown under a corporate entity Facebook or YouTube account.

Violation 3. 13-35-225. Election materials not to be anonymous -- notice -- penalty.

13-37-231. Reports to be certified as true, complete, and correct

On or about April 23, 2026 Mr. Backen was observed passing out campaign materials i.e. campaign buttons, that have not been disclosed in a COPP filing as to quantity, cost, date of purchase and what funds were used to procure them. These items should have been listed on the March 1 through April 15 filing. In addition, there is no contribution or expenditure tied to this purchase to show how these materials were purchased. See Photo



Violation 4. 13-35-225. Election materials not to be anonymous -- notice -- penalty.

13-37-231. Reports to be certified as true, complete, and correct

Prior to the date of April 15, there were many 18"x24" "Backen" campaign signs appearing around the District. There is no accounting for these signs that, due to the timing of their release, obviously were purchased and paid for by the campaign during the time period covered by the January 1 through March 15 or the March 16 through April 15 required filings. In addition, there is no contribution or expenditure tied to this purchase to show how these materials were purchased. This report was filed and certified to be true, complete and correct when in fact it was not.

- Violation 4. 13-37-231 Reports to be certified as true, complete, and correct.**
13-35-225 Election materials not to be anonymous -- notice -- penalty.

The required March 16 through April 15 report was filed 3 days late, one would assume the delay would have been to update the above purchases and any contributions to the campaign. In addition, there is no contribution tied to this purchase to show how these materials were purchased. This report was filed as complete and certified to be true and correct when in fact it was not.

- Violation 5. 13-37-231 Reports to be certified as true, complete, and correct**
13-35-225 Election materials not to be anonymous -- notice -- penalty.

The required February 05 through March 15 report was filed without any purchases, or any expenditures. In addition, there is no contribution tied to this purchase to show how these materials were purchased. This report was filed as complete and certified to be true and correct when in fact it was not.

The above violations clearly violate the candidate signing of the C-3 Code of Campaign Practices and numerous MCA and ARM rules and regulations. Below is citation of many of these campaign finance laws that ALL candidates are required to follow that this candidate has violated. This is not an exhaustive list.

- 13-35-301 Adoption of code of fair campaign practices.**
13-35-103 Violations as misdemeanor.
13-35-Part 5 "Prohibition on Corporate Contributions and Expenditures in Montana Elections Act".
13-35-214 Illegal influence of voters
13-35-238 Donations -- prohibition -- penalty

Exhibit 1-4

Matthew Backen
36510 Hwy 2
Libby, MT 59923

July 30, 2023

Secretary of State Montana, USA,

Please be advised that I, the owner of Backen Enterprises LLC, am granting my consent for the use/transfer of the registered name Dorio's to be used as a DBA under future ownership of Flowing River Ventures LLC.

Thanks you,

Matthew Backen
Owner - Backen Enterprises LLC

B1089-3461 08/04/2023 8:54 AM Received by MT Secretary of State Christi Jacobsen


Matthew Backen
36510 Hwy 2
Libby, MT 59923

July 30, 2023

Secretary of State Montana, USA,

Please be advised that I, the owner of Backen Enterprises LLC, am granting my consent for the use/transfer of the registered name Dorio's to be used as a DBA under future ownership of Flowing River Ventures LLC.

Thank you,


Matthew Backen
Owner - Backen Enterprises LLC

B1089-3463 08/04/2023 8:54 AM Received by MT Secretary of State Christi Jacobsen



City of Libby

Business License or Registration

This certifies that **FLOWING RIVER VENTURES LLC DBA DORIOS'** having paid into the treasury of the above-named city the sum of: \$ 60.00. In accordance with said city, license is hereby granted to **VINCENT G BACKEN** for:

Physical Address: **316 CALIFORNIA AVE**
License Number: **12452**
License Expires: December 31, 2023

City Clerk/Treasurer

Deputy



15750149



STATE OF MONTANA
SECRETARY OF STATE
REGISTRATION OF ASSUMED BUSINESS NAME

For Office Use Only
STATE OF MONTANA
-FILED-
SECRETARY OF STATE
File Number: 15750149
Date Filed: 8/4/2023 6:54:32 AM

FILING FEE: \$20.00

B1089-3460 08/04/2023 8:54 AM Received by MT Secretary of State Christi Jacobsen

Filing Fees & Processing Options		24 Hour Processing - \$40.00 - Processed within 1 business day
Fees and Processing Options		
Business Name		Dorio's
Entity name		
Consent Letter	Consent Letter for Dorio's.pdf	
Business Description		Resturant
Business Description		
Applicant		Limited Liability Company (LLC/PLLC)
Applicant Type		
Registered Business Entity		Flowing River Ventures LLC Domestic Limited Liability Company File Number C1375503
Search for your business entity		
Applicant Mailing Address		VINCENT BACKEN 427 THOMAS STREET LIBBY, MT 59923
Address		
Declarations		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I understand that the information I enter into the online system is public information and will appear online and on copy requests exactly as I key it into the system.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I have been authorized by the business entity to file this document online.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I, HEREBY SWEAR AND/OR AFFIRM, under penalty of law, including criminal prosecution, that the facts contained in this document are true. I certify that I am signing this document as the person(s) whose signature is required, or as an agent of the person(s) whose signature is required, who has authorized me to place his/her signature on this document.		
Signature		
<i>Self</i>	<i>Vincent backen</i>	<i>08/04/2023</i>
Signer's Capacity	Sign Here	Date
Position	Applicant	
Daytime Contact		
Phone Number	(406) 200-3193	
Email	backen.vincent@gmail.com	