

THE STATE OF MONTANA

Commissioner of Political
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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 Jennifer Savage
Complete Mailing Address P.O. Box 7334
Missoula, MT 59807
Phone Numbers: Work 406-240-8977 Home 406-240-8977

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

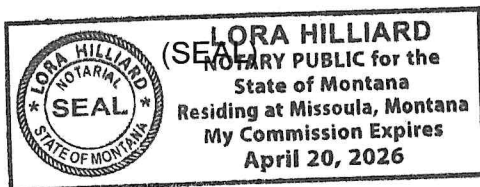
Complete Name Daniel Carlino
Complete Mailing Address 729 S. 2nd Street W.
Missoula, MT 59801
Phone Numbers: Work 406-239-2240 Home 406-239-2240

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 Missoula

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



Jennifer Savage
Signature of Complainant

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 3 day of September, 2025.

Lora Hilliard
Notary Public

My Commission Expires: April 20, 2026

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.

Please see attached.

Complaints must be:

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

Complaint #1:

Daniel Carlino, a candidate for Ward 3 Missoula City Council, sent five separate text messages to an undetermined number of voters, between August 16, 2025 and August 26, 2025. These are included with this complaint. He claims these were sent without his knowledge by Maple Bridge Strategies who he had contracted to work on his campaign. These texts were illegal and Mr. Carlino's campaign potentially financially benefited from them.

1. These texts were sent without attribution. No "Paid for by..." was included on any of the texts so voters have no real idea who paid for them. This is a violation of Montana campaign finance laws.
2. Mr. Carlino didn't file a C-7 to note the expenditures of these texts in a timely manner (48 hours) as we are within 30 days of a primary election. This is a violation of Montana campaign finance laws.
3. Mr. Carlino didn't report any in-kind contributions to cover the costs of the texts. This is a violation of Montana campaign finance laws.
4. These texts were written in first person ("I'm Daniel Carlino") and provide specific links to Mr. Carlino's Act Blue fundraising page. These links seem to be specific forms in Act Blue as noted by the urls below and should be easily traceable. All of these link to pages that have this disclaimer: Paid for by Carlino for Missoula - 729 S. 2nd Street W. Street Missoula, MT 59801

https://secure.actblue.com/donate/danielcarlino_txt?refcode=Onb

https://secure.actblue.com/donate/danielcarlino_txt_aoc?amount=28

https://secure.actblue.com/donate/danielcarlino_12days

https://secure.actblue.com/donate/danielcarlino_txt_2weeks?refcode=8/26&amount=28

If they were sent by an organization or PAC on behalf of Mr. Carlino, there is no financial record of this. This amounts to coordination, is a violation of Montana campaign finance laws and calls into question the legality of any donations received from these texts.

These texts began appearing August 21 and were sent approximately every other day for five to seven days. If Mr. Carlino didn't approve them, why didn't he ask Maple Bridge Strategies to stop sending them after the first one? Why didn't he disavow them right away instead of waiting two weeks to address these texts and only after an op ed appeared in the Missoulian calling them into question.

Most importantly, did Mr. Carlino's campaign benefit financially from these text messages that were illegal? Again, the links are traceable as are the donations received through them. Does he plan on keeping this money?

Complaint #2

Daniel Carlino's campaign posted illegal flyers on at least 25 power/light poles on Labor Day weekend. Pictures included in this complaint. The city of Missoula's code compliance team had to remove them after being notified.

Texts:

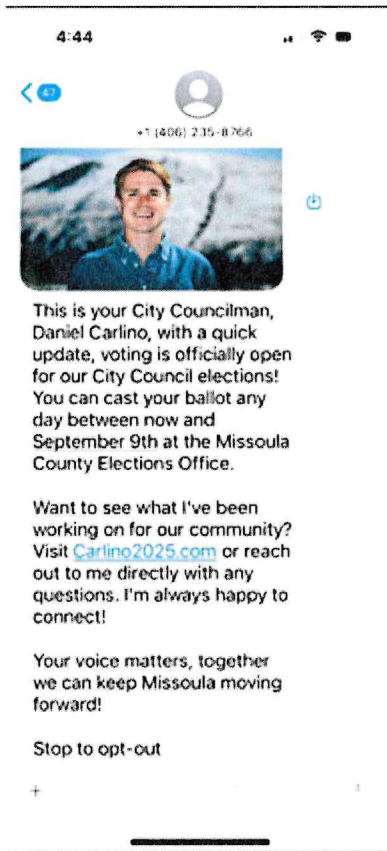
The following are text messages received by Missoula voters and sent as screenshots to the Savage campaign.

Text #1: Received 8/20/25

This is your City Councilman, Daniel Carlino, with a quick update, voting is officially open for our City Council elections! You can cast your ballot any day between now and September 9th at the Missoula County Elections Office.

Want to see what I've been working on for our community? Visit Carlino2025.com or reach out to me directly with any questions. I'm always happy to connect! Your Voice matters, together we can keep Missoula moving forward!

Stop to Opt-out



Text #2: Received 8/21/25

Hey Michael - I'm Daniel Carlino, a 28-year-old Missoula City Councilor, serving as one of the youngest progressive incumbents in the country.

My record speaks for itself: I've fought for climate justice, working families, and a more just Missoula. Now corporate PACs and right-wing interests are targeting me and my seat. Trump backed billionaires are pouring money into halting our movement.

If we fall behind, they win. It's that simple. We need to raise \$2,000 before midnight to prove our grassroots movement has the strength to fight back.

Can I count on you to chip in \$25 right now to show Donald Trump and his cronies that Missoula deserves better?

secure.actblue.com/donate/danielcarlino_txt?refcode=Onb

Every hour matters and every dollar counts. Let's show big money that people power wins.

Stop to OptOut



Text 3: Received 8/23/25

Hey **Susan**, it's Daniel Carlino! You may know me as the 28-year-old Missoula City Councilor and one of the youngest progressive incumbents in the country.

This fight isn't easy, but I recently had the chance to catch up with AOC, and her advice was simple: always keep at it. That's exactly what me and my grassroots movement are doing in Missoula, fighting for climate justice, housing, and working families. My record speaks for itself. But now, it's not just corporate PACs and right-wing extremists, the Israel lobby is targeting me and my seat.

We set a goal of 100 people chipping in \$28 today to show them our progressive movement won't back down or be intimidated. Can I count on you to be one of them, [FName]?

secure.actblue.com/donate/danielcarlino_txt_aoc?amount=28

With AOC's advice and your support, we'll keep at it and keep winning.

Stop to unsubscribe

Hey Susan, it's Daniel Carlino! You may know me as the 28-year-old Missoula City Councillor and one of the youngest progressive incumbents in the country.

This fight isn't easy, but I recently had the chance to catch up with AOC, and her advice was simple: always keep at it. That's exactly what me and my grassroots movement are doing in Missoula, fighting for climate justice, housing, and working families. My record speaks for itself.

But now, it's not just corporate PACs and right-wing extremists, the Israel lobby is targeting me and my seat.

We set a goal of 100 people chipping in \$28 today to show them our progressive movement won't back down or be intimidated. Can I count on you to be one of them, [FName]?

 secure.actblue.com/donate/danielcarlino_txt_aoc?amount=28

With AOC's advice and your support, we'll keep at it and keep winning.

Stop to unsubscribe

Text #4: Received 8/26/25

~~Michael~~, the attacks are piling up, and I'm their target. It's Daniel Carlino, the 28-year-old Missoula City Councilor.

Corporate PACs, right-wing extremists, and MAGA Millionaires are pouring money into this race to take out me and my seat. With just 2 weeks until the primary, they think they can buy this election.

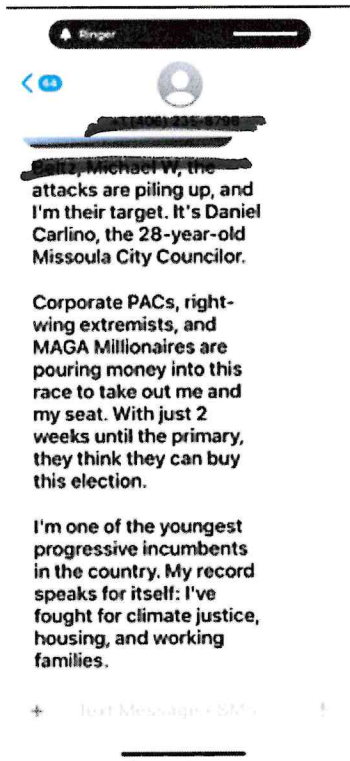
I'm one of the youngest progressive incumbents in the country. My record speaks for itself: I've fought for climate justice, housing, and working families.

I need you with me now more than ever. We set an ambitious goal of 400 people chipping in \$28 this week to prove our movement can't be bought or bullied. Will you be one of them?

https://secure.actblue.com/donate/danielcarlino_txt_2weeks?refcode=8/26&amount=28

This is the moment. If we fight back now, we win.

Stop to unsubscribe



Text #5: Received 08/29/2025



Flyers:















Missoulain Op Ed:

GUEST VIEW

Electeds call on democratic socialist candidates to use integrity | Opinion

1

Pause

Unmute

Remaining Time

-0:22

Picture-in-Picture
Fullscreen

Facebook

Twitter

Bluesky

Email

Print

Copy article link

Save

The Missoula City Council primary election is Sept. 9. Unfortunately some candidates from the local democratic socialist party are spreading lies and negativity in their messaging.

In Ward 3, candidate Daniel Carlino has pushed out texts to Missoulians in the last few days stating: "Now corporate PACs and right-wing interests are targeting me and my seat. Trump backed billionaires are pouring money into halting our movement...", and "[I]t's not just corporate PACs and right-wing extremists, the Israel lobby is targeting me and my seat."

None of this is true. It is a lie to broadcast these claims. In fact, all donations listed by all candidates in these races are from individuals. Corporate PACs and right-wing interests? Nope. And how and where is the "Israel lobby" targeting Mr. Carlino? Nowhere in the candidates'

financial reports, nor in reality. For Mr. Carlino to text these claims goes directly to his integrity. These are low blows and not true.

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And on that topic of campaign financing...Mr. Carlino to date has not filed expense reports for these texts, nor is there either an acknowledgment by his campaign for funding the texts, nor a disclaimer...all of which amount to campaign finance violations under Montana law.

Another candidate, Lucas Moody, who is running in Ward 1 has sponsored posters which state "Your Current City Council, Takes Money from PACs - Legally Distinct from Corruption". Another strong

assertion that is a lie. No one in these races has taken money from a Political Action Committee - a "PAC".

Blatantly spreading these untruths is reflective of character and governing style. Missoula deserves honesty and transparency.

The undersigned have endorsed Jennifer Savage for Ward 3 and Betsy Craske for Ward 1. Their races are impacted by these lies. We call on the Democratic Socialist candidates to campaign truthfully and with integrity. After all what is the point of winning office if the candidate uses a sham to win?

Amber Sherril, Mike Nugent, Betsy Craske, Jennifer Savage, Gwen Jones, Stacie Anderson, Chris Foster, Mayor

Recent Missioulain Article:



**Carlino: Texts claiming
'MAGA millionaires'
influencing local**

election sent without permission

Griffen Smith

2



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A series of text messages recently sent to voters from a Missoula City Council candidate contained inaccurate information, but that candidate told the Missoulian the messages were sent without his permission.

Ward 3 Councilor Daniel Carlino said he was working with a consultant on distributing campaign text messages, but the messages were sent to voters without his review and contained false information about political action committees.

The text messages sparked a [letter to the editor](#) from several current councilors and candidates, including incumbent Councilor Jennifer Savage who moved into Carlino's district this summer, claiming Carlino's text campaign was spreading "lies."

"It's really disappointing and harming my campaign that someone did that," Carlino told the Missoulian in a text message. "I didn't send a text to anyone that said any of what they're claiming. ... I don't endorse it."

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Missoula City Councilmember Daniel Carlino talks during the mayor selection process in September 2022.

TOM BAUER, Missoulain

The messages, which were distributed by DC-based consultant Maple Bridge Strategies, claimed that "corporate PACs and right-wing interests are targeting" Carlino and his city council seat, according to texts reviewed by the Missoulian.

Other texts from the group said Carlino was being targeted by the "Israeli lobby," while others said "MAGA millionaires" were pouring money into the race.

None of the texts included information for who paid for the messages, which is required under Montana state law.

A text message obtained by the Missoulian showing false claims around the local Missoula election. Councilor Daniel Carlino said the texts were sent without his permission.

Provided

MapleBridge Strategies told the Missoulian in a Tuesday phone call that the messages were sent in error. Brandon Russell, the group's executive director, also sent an apology letter to Carlino over the incident.

"At MapleBridge we pride ourselves on careful coordination and respecting the integrity of our clients' campaigns. In this instance, that standard was not met," Russell wrote in the letter to Carlino. "The text should have gone through your review process before being sent out, and I recognize that skipping that step was both unprofessional and unfair to you and your campaign."

Carlino said he does not plan to work with MapleBridge Strategies moving forward and noted that he did not pay the group because of the error. Carlino also said he contacted the Montana Commissioner of Political Practices about the incident.

The Montana Commissioner for Political Practices, Christopher Gallus, told the Missoulian on Friday that no formal complaint has been received by his office. Generally, a complaint is required to initiate an investigation, Gallus said.

Campaign finance reports for the race showed Carlino spent \$1,201.20 on text messages to voters on Aug. 27. Carlino told the Missoulian that the expenditure was for a different organization.

A text message obtained by the Missoulian showing false claims around the local Missoula election. Councilor Daniel Carlino said the texts were sent without his permission.

Provided

After some of the factually incorrect text messages circulated around Missoula, several candidates for office penned a letter to the Missoulian and other news outlets to condemn the texts for spreading misinformation.

"It is a lie to broadcast these claims," the letter said. "In fact, all donations listed by all candidates in these races are from individuals. Corporate PACs and right-wing interests? Nope. And how and where is the "Israel lobby" targeting Mr. Carlino? Nowhere in the candidates' financial reports, nor in reality. For Mr. Carlino to text these claims goes directly to his integrity. These are low blows and not true."

The letter, published on Aug. 28, was signed by Savage, Missoula Mayor Andrea Davis, City Council President Amber Sherrill, incumbent councilors Mike Nugent, Stacie Anderson, and Gwen Jones.

Council candidates Chris Foster and Betsy Craske also signed the letter.

Savage said in a statement to the Missoulian that she still has unanswered questions about the text messages and said candidates should follow state campaign rules.

Jennifer Savage is pictured in 2021.

TOM BAUER, Missoulian

"Ultimately, it's up to Mr. Carlino to answer these questions and the Commissioner of Political Practices to weigh in on likely violations of campaign finance laws of which there appear to be many," Savage said. "In the meantime, I'm focused on running my campaign, clean

and transparent, because voters deserve that from their elected officials."

Savage is also employing mass text messages, according to campaign finance reports. Savage spent \$1,160.64 on text messages on Aug. 26 and \$726.44 on texts on Aug. 21.

The primary election for city council seats in Ward 2, Ward 3 and Ward 6, as well as a primary for the Missoula mayor race, is set for Sept. 9.

Griffen Smith is the local government reporter for the Missoulian.