Ethics

Complaint Form (10/17)

Person bringing complaint (Complainant):
Type or print in ink all information on this form except for verification signature

Complete Name: Sandi Luckey, MDP
Complete Mailing Address: 303 N. Ewing Helena, MT 59624
Phone Numbers: Work 406-444-9520 Home 406-444-1057

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

Complete Name: Christi Jacobson
Complete Mailing Address: PO Box 458 Helena, MT 59624
Phone Numbers: Work Home 406-465-0215

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 Lewis & Clark

I, Sandi Luckey, 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 27 day of January, 2020

Notary Public

My Commission Expires: 7-18-2023
Statement of facts:

Describe in detail the alleged violation(s), including pertinent dates, 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.

See Attached
Transcript of Peter Christian, KGVO News Director interview of January 10, 2020

As KGVO News was on the phone with Christi Jacobsen with the Montana Secretary of State’s office asking about the opening of the candidate filing season, it turns out that Jacobsen herself has filed to run for the office currently held by Corey Stapleton.

“We opened our candidate filing at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, with several people waiting at the door to file their paperwork,” said Jacobsen. “In total, we had 100 candidates file on the first day both online and in person. The first in line was Maryann Dunwell who is running for a legislative seat in Helena.”

Jacobsen revealed her own candidacy by accurately stating the fee to file for the office of Secretary of State.

“For Secretary of State, the annual salary is $98,104, so the filing fee for that is one percent which is exactly $981 and four cents, and I know that because I paid it yesterday when I filed for office,” she said. She explained her reasons for seeking the office. “I’ve been working and leading the team here at the Secretary of State’s office for the past three years and I’m the most qualified for the seat. We’ve started a lot of great things and we’ve made a lot of improvements but we have a lot of unfinished business, and I’m fully invested in seeing the projects through.”

Jacobsen said the current election system at her office is over 20 years old, and needs updating.

“We’re planning to launch the new system in 2021,” she said. “The longer a system goes without replacing it increases the vulnerability of the system, and with the security of elections being a top priority for me and for my office, I really would like to see the replacement of that system through.”

Jacobson, a Republican, made a surprise announcement as the interview was coming to a close.

“Secretary (Corey) Stapleton actually endorsed me as his replacement, so I’m very honored for that endorsement,” she said. Stapleton is the only veteran among the major elected officials in the state, and Jacobsen acknowledged his service.
“I very much respect him for serving our country and being a Naval Academy graduate and understand what’s going on in the world and the military situations that we are in.”

The candidate filing season continues until March 9.

[SOS News Interview Reveals Secretary of State Candidate](https://newstalkkgvo.com/sos-news-interview-reveals-secretary-of-state-candidate/?utm_source=tsmclip&utm_medium=referral)
January 27, 2020

Commissioner of Political Practices
1205 Eighth Avenue
Post Office Box 202401
Helena, MT 59620-2401

Commissioner Mangan;

I declare under penalty of perjury this formal complaint against Christi Jacobson alleging violations of MCA §2-2-121(3)(a). Jacobson’s address and telephone number are: P.O. Box 458 Helena MT 59624. 406-465-0215.

On January 10th, 2020, Jacobson, in the course of an interview by Peter Christian of KVGO News (a radio station in Missoula, MT) announced that she was a candidate for the office of Secretary of State of Montana. Jacobson is an employee of the Secretary of State and is a public employee within the meaning of MCA §2-2-121(3). The announcement was made during regular office hours. In addition to making the public announcement, Jacobson also touted her qualifications and her agenda for the campaign. Moreover, she took the opportunity to announce that the current Secretary of State, her boss, Corey Stapleton endorsed her candidacy. (See transcript of radio broadcast attached as Exhibit 1 and also available on line at https://newstalkkgvo.com/sos-news-interview-reveals-secretary-of-state-candidate/)

As you are aware, §2-2-121(3)(a) provides that an employee may not “use or permit the use of public time” to solicit support for the nomination of any person to public office. The conduct described, above constitutes a breach of public trust, prohibited by law.

Moreover, since Jacobson was the primary actor in Stapleton’s unethical conduct last year for sending out press releases announcing his candidacy for Governor on state letterhead, on state time and using state emails, she cannot be heard to say she was unaware of the ethical prohibition (See your summary decision in Cause No. COPP-2019-ETH-001 dated February 11, 2019).

\[Signature\]

Sandy Luckey
Executive Director
Montana Democratic Party

Subscribed and sworn before me this 27th day of January, 2020

\[Signature\]

Notary Public

Paid for and authorized by the Montana Democratic Party, PO Box 802, Helena, Montana, 59624. Sandi Luckey, Treasurer