

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
CAMPAIGN FINANCE AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE BOARD**

Findings and Order In The Matter Of Greater Minnesota Votes

Summary of the Facts

In response to an inquiry from the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board (“the Board”), Neil Ritchie, treasurer, the Greater Minnesota Votes Committee (“the Committee”), confirmed that the Chris Coleman for Mayor committee, an association not registered with the Board, made a contribution of \$500 on October 26, 2006.

Minnesota Statutes, section 10A.27, subdivision 13 (a), prohibits a political committee from accepting a contribution in excess of \$100 from an unregistered association unless, at the time the contribution was made, the unregistered association provides the recipient with the disclosure required by Minnesota Statutes, section 10A.20. A political committee that accepts a contribution from an unregistered association without the appropriate disclosure is subject to a civil penalty of up to four times the amount of the contribution over \$100.

By letter dated March 8, 2007, Neil Ritchie, treasurer, stated, “...I was not aware of the requirements of section 10A.27 regarding the need for all committees contributing in excess of \$100 to be registered with the Board. As a first time treasurer for a state committee, I recall being unsure of what to do with this particular contribution and attempted to comply by listing its Ramsey County Origins. ...Greater Minnesota Votes has returned the entire \$500 contribution to the Coleman for Mayor Committee.” A copy of the check and letter returning the contribution dated March 9, 2007, was provided by Mr. Ritchie.

This matter was considered by the Board in executive session at its meeting on May 8, 2007. The Board’s decision was based upon correspondence from Mr. Ritchie and Board records.

Based on the above Summary of the Facts and Relevant Statutes, the Board makes the following:

Finding Concerning Probable Cause

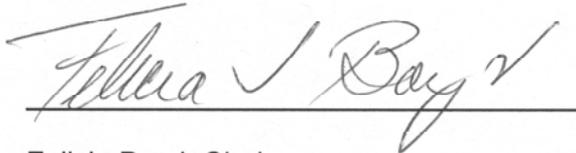
1. There is probable cause to believe that the Greater Minnesota Votes Committee accepted a contribution that exceeded \$100 from the Chris Coleman for Mayor Committee, an association that is not registered with the Board, without receiving the required disclosure resulting in a violation of Minnesota Statutes, section 10A.27, subdivision 13. There is no probable cause to believe that this violation was intentional or done with the intent to circumvent the requirements of Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 10A.
2. There is probable cause that this contribution was not returned within 60 days as permitted in Minnesota Statutes, section 10A.15, subdivision 3.

Based on the above Finding Concerning Probable Cause, the Board issues the following:

ORDER

1. The Board imposes a civil penalty of \$400, one times the amount by which the contribution exceeded \$100, on the Greater Minnesota Votes Committee for accepting a contribution from an unregistered association without the disclosure required by Minnesota Statutes, section 10A.27, subdivision 13.
2. The Greater Minnesota Votes Committee is directed to forward to the Board payment of the civil penalty by check or money order payable to the State of Minnesota, within thirty days of receipt of this order.
3. If the Greater Minnesota Votes Committee does not comply with the provisions of this order, the Board's Executive Director shall request that the Attorney General bring an action for the remedies available under Minnesota Statutes, section 10A.34.
4. The Board investigation of this matter is hereby made a part of the public records of the Board pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 10A.02, subdivision 11, and upon payment by the civil penalty imposed herein, this matter is concluded.

Dated: May 8, 2007

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Felicia J. Boyd", is written over a horizontal line.

Felicia Boyd, Chair
Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board

Relevant Statutes

10A.27, subdivision 13. Unregistered association limit; statement; penalty. (a) The treasurer of a political committee, political fund, principal campaign committee, or party unit must not accept a contribution of more than \$100 from an association not registered under this chapter unless the contribution is accompanied by a written statement that meets the disclosure and reporting period requirements imposed by section 10A.20. This statement must be certified as true and correct by an officer of the contributing association. The committee, fund, or party unit that accepts the contribution must include a copy of the statement with the report that discloses the contribution to the board. This subdivision does not apply when a national political party contributes money to its affiliate in this state.

(b) An unregistered association may provide the written statement required by this subdivision to no more than three committees, funds, or party units in a calendar year. Each statement must cover at least the 30 days immediately preceding and including the date on which the contribution was made. An unregistered association or an officer of it is subject to a civil penalty imposed by the board of up to \$1,000, if the association or its officer:

(1) fails to provide a written statement as required by this subdivision; or

(2) fails to register after giving the written statement required by this subdivision to more than three committees, funds, or party units in a calendar year.

(c) The treasurer of a political committee, political fund, principal campaign committee, or party unit who accepts a contribution in excess of \$100 from an unregistered association without the required written disclosure statement is subject to a civil penalty up to four times the amount in excess of \$100.