



STATE OF WASHINGTON
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

711 Capitol Way Rm. 206, PO Box 40908 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0908 • (360) 753-1111 • FAX (360) 753-1112
Toll Free 1-877-601-2828 • E-mail: pdc@pdc.wa.gov • Website: www.pdc.wa.gov

October 10, 2017

gwbetten@gmail.com

Subject: Complaint regarding Karen Guzak, PDC Case 25501

Dear Bill Betten:

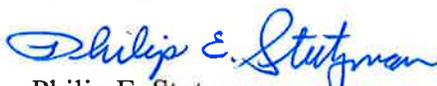
The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) has completed its initial review of the complaint you filed on September 18, 2017. Your complaint alleged that Karen Guzak may have violated RCW 42.17A.335(1)(b) by sponsoring political advertising that falsely represented she is the incumbent Mayor in the City of Snohomish when in fact she is not the incumbent.

PDC staff reviewed your allegations and found that Karen Guzak sponsored political advertising that included the words, "Karen Guzak 4 Mayor" along with other words, including, "Our town; Our Mayor; Our Community." To find that a person has violated RCW 42.17A.335(1)(b) by making a false statement of incumbency, staff must prove that the statement constituted libel or defamation, and the Legislature has specifically indicated in RCW 42.17A.335(3) that it is not a violation for a candidate or candidate's agent to falsely represent that the candidate is the incumbent for the office sought because a candidate cannot defame himself or herself.

Based on these initial findings, staff has determined that in this instance, there is no reason to believe Karen Guzak has violated RCW 42.17A.335(1)(b), and no further action is required. PDC staff has closed this matter, and will not be conducting a more formal investigation into your complaint or pursuing enforcement action in this case.

If you have questions, you may contact Phil Stutzman at 360-664-8853, toll-free at 1-877-601-2828, or by e-mail at phil.stutzman@pdc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,


Philip E. Stutzman
Sr. Compliance Officer

Endorsed by,

Peter Lavalley
Executive Director

cc: Karen Guzak