

2009 PAC Legislation

The 81st Texas Legislature enacted numerous changes to Texas laws under the jurisdiction of the Texas Ethics Commission, including the following subjects: Sworn Complaints, Campaign Finance, and Lobby. You will be advised when a summary of the legislation is posted on the TEC website.

PAC Report, July 30-31, 2009 - Betty J. Hill, PAC Treasurer

Campaign finance reports filed on line with the Texas Ethics Commission are public records and can be accessed by any person. There is a man in California with nothing better to do than browse campaign reports filed with the Texas Ethics Commission. Then, he files ethics complaints with the TEC against our elected officials. Unfortunately, there is a so-called Republican group in the Houston area doing the same thing to many Republican elected officials. In at least one case, this group has filed an ethics complaint against one of our clubs for a report submitted in 2007.

This is a word of caution to all our clubs. Please ensure data is being correctly entered, especially reimbursements. For example, if Jane Doe purchases stamps for the club, the vendor is the Post Office and should be reported as being the payee. In the remarks section, the club PAC treasurer should enter "Reimburse Jane Doe for stamps." Never list Jane Doe as the payee. This is the format that should be used for all reimbursements.

If your club has a credit card, Mastercard or Visa is not the payee when reporting expenditures. The vendor for each purchase listed on the monthly statement must be identified. Recently, one Democrat state representative from the Houston area was fined almost \$10,000 for failing to itemize credit card purchases.

In filing reports with the Texas Ethics Commission, the PAC treasurer must manually enter the total amount of funds maintained by the club on the last day of the reporting period. This is the checkbook balance plus any petty cash and savings accounts.

All expenditures must be reported. To simplify reporting of expenditures, report each expenditure as a political expenditure.

Also, if a club PAC treasurer decides to resign, the club president must inform the resigning treasurer that her responsibilities do not end until she files a termination of treasurer report with the Texas Ethics Commission.

Betty J. Hill--TFRW PAC Treasurer 210-681-9468 / BJHSATX@aol.com