

This ethics complaint is filed in response to state senate candidate Harry Roberts taking illegal corporate money into his campaign committee in direct violation of Amendment 2 of the Missouri Constitution. The voters in Missouri passed Amendment 2 to keep corporate money out of Missouri politics. Despite this clear mandate, Harry Roberts and his candidate committee have elected to disregard the will of the people.

Missouri's Amendment 2 prohibiting corporate contributions to candidate committees took effect on December 8, 2016. On December 22, 2016, after the effective date of Amendment 2, the candidate committee of Friends of Harry Roberts (MEC ID No. A131104) (hereafter, "County Committee") received a campaign contribution in the amount of \$2,500 from a St. Joseph, MO business called Biozyme. According to the Missouri Secretary of State's office, Biozyme is incorporated as a domestic corporation in the state of Missouri. At the time the contribution was received, the County Committee was designated to support the election of a candidate to county office. As such, the contribution violated Amendment 2's newly-enacted ban on corporate contributions, which applies to all candidate committees.

On August 22, 2017, the Friends of Harry Roberts committee (MEC ID: A131104) was terminated and the entirety of the funds from the County Committee, including the corporate contribution referenced above, was transferred to a newly formed committee, Friends of Harry Roberts (MEC ID: C171219) (hereafter, "State Committee"). The State Committee's designated purpose was to help its candidate seek election to state office, specifically the State Senate. Amendment 2's prohibitions on corporate contributions also apply to the State Committee. As such, the transfer of corporate funds from the County Committee to the State Committee constituted a second violation of Amendment 2.

Even if it is presumed that corporate contributions to county office candidate committees are permissible under Amendment 2, and therefore, the original corporate contribution to the County Committee was valid, there can be no question the transfer to the State Committee violates Amendment 2. As the MEC's advisory opinion No. 2017.02.cf.001 recognizes, a candidate who converts his or her county committee to a committee to run for state office cannot transfer contributions in excess of the Amendment 2 limits to the newly formed state committee. Similarly, a county candidate committee cannot attempt to thwart Amendment 2 by transferring corporate funds from a county committee to a state committee. To do so would allow a candidate to circumvent the prohibitions on corporate money under Amendment 2.

Based on the multiple flagrant violations of Amendment 2, the State Committee should be sanctioned by the MEC to the fullest extent of the law, including a public finding of a campaign finance violation. At minimum, the illegal \$2,500 contribution from Biozyme must be refunded. To the extent the MEC does not act on this complaint, the MEC should launch an independent investigation into the campaign finance violations of the State Committee and the County Committee.