

Legislative Ethics Board



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COMPLAINT 2025 – No. 16

In re Shaun Scott

October 24, 2025

REASONABLE CAUSE DETERMINATION AND STIPULATION

I. NATURE OF COMPLAINT

The Complaint alleges that Respondent violated the Ethics Act by blocking Complainant from accessing his (Respondent's) X (Twitter) account because Complainant disagreed with Respondent's political views. Although the complaint does not cite a specific provision of the Act to have been violated by Respondent, Board counsel has analyzed the complaint as alleging a violation of RCW 42.52.180 (use of public resources for campaign purposes).

II. JURISDICTION

The Board has personal and subject matter jurisdiction in this matter. RCW 42.52.320

III. PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Complaint 2025 – No. 16 was received on April 26, 2025, and was discussed by the Board at its regularly scheduled meeting on September 8, 2025.

IV. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent is a member of the House of Representatives representing the 43rd legislative district. He was elected in 2024 and assumed office on January 13, 2025.
2. Complainant is a podcaster and radio host in Seattle.
3. Respondent has an X account that states as follows: "Shaun Scott is State Representative for Washington's 43rd LD; Capitol Hill, Wallingford, Fremont, the U-District, Montlake and more. Official account."
4. Although Complainant was blocked for a time from Respondent's X account and believed the account was Respondent's official (legislative) account, the account was a personal account despite Respondent referring to it as his official account.

5. The House does not allow members to have any official social media accounts other than Facebook.
6. On May 14, 2025, House Counsel sent Respondent an email regarding some of the content on Respondent's social media accounts. The accounts contained campaign materials and Counsel explained that even if the account was not the Respondent's official campaign account, the Board still considered the account to be a campaign account. In particular, House Counsel explained that it appeared that Respondent's X account contained legislatively produced videos and photographs.
7. House Counsel indicated that the photographs could be used on this private account if they had been purchased. If not, House Counsel recommended that Respondent purchase them.
8. House Counsel further indicated that the legislatively produced videos should be removed immediately and substituted with a link that would take the user directly to the videos on the legislative site.
9. House Democratic caucus communications staff confirmed that at least one video on the Respondent's private X account was produced with legislative resources.

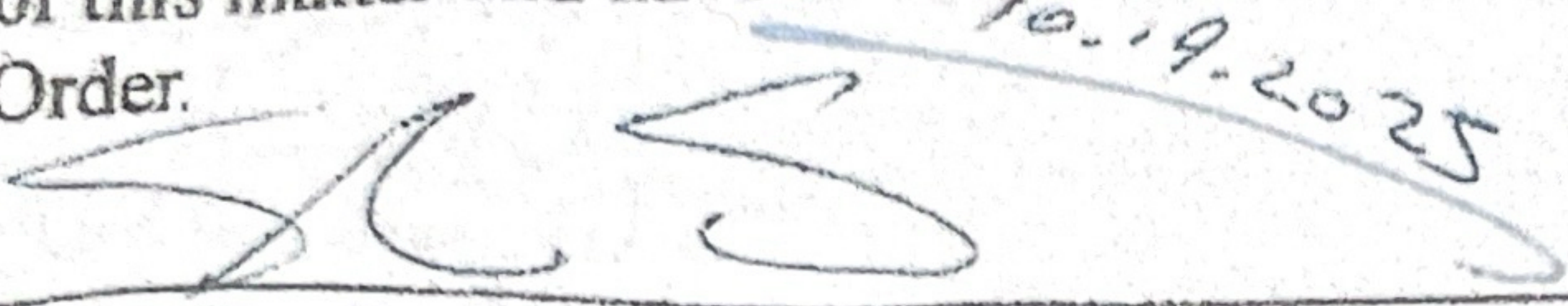
V. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

RCW 42.52.180 prohibits the use of public resources for the purpose of assisting a campaign for the election of a person to an office or for the promotion of or opposition to a ballot proposition.

In *In re Stambaugh*, 2016 – Nos. 8 & 13, the Board held that any personal social media account that contained campaign material, even if the account was not an official campaign account, is nevertheless considered a campaign account. As such, the Board held that legislatively produced material cannot be embedded in the account but rather must contain a link that takes the user out of the private account and directly to the legislative account.

Respondent was instructed by House Counsel on May 14, 2025 to immediately remove all legislatively produced videos. He did not do that and, as of September 8, 2025, at least one legislatively produced video remains on his personal X account which also contains campaign material. This action constitutes a violation of RCW 42.52.180.

I, Shaun Scott, hereby certify that I have read this Stipulation and Order in its entirety; that I have had the option of reviewing this agreement with legal counsel, or have actually reviewed it with legal counsel; fully understand its legal significance and consequence; agree to the entry of findings of fact and conclusions of law, and agree to personally sign it as a resolution of this matter and have voluntarily signed this Stipulation and Order.


Shaun Scott

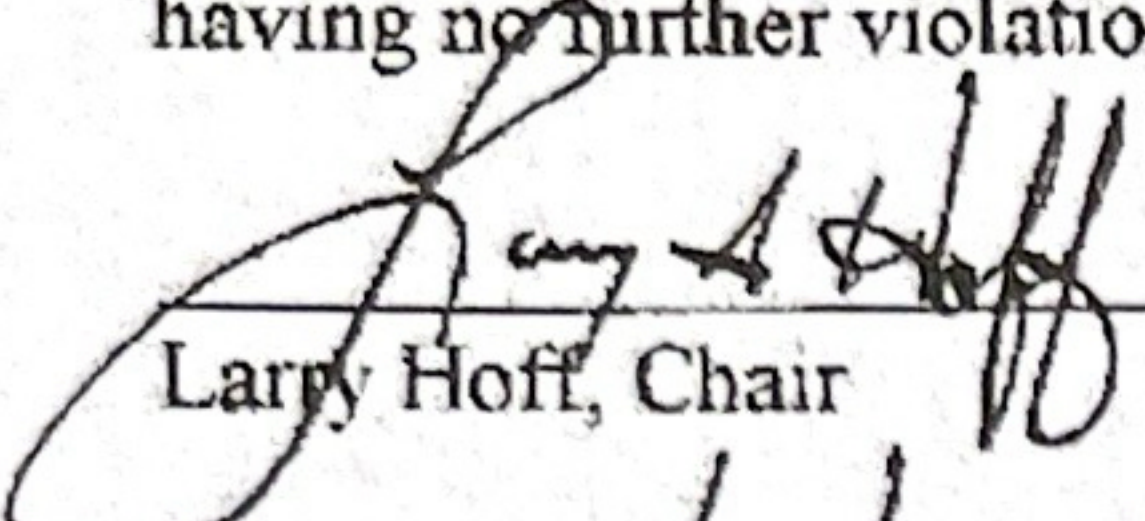
10/19/2025
Date

Having reviewed the proposed Stipulation, and on behalf of the Legislative Ethics Board, the Stipulation is accepted.

Larry Hoff, Chair

VI. ORDER AND STIPULATION

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED: that reasonable cause exists for the Board to conclude that Rep. Scott violated RCW 42.52.180 and, pursuant to RCW 42.52.320(1)€ that he pay a civil penalty of One Thousand Dollars (\$1000), payable to the Washington State Treasurer; provided, however, that Five Hundred Dollars (\$500) of this penalty be suspended, with such suspension conditioned upon Rep. Scott having no further violations of the Ethics in Public Service Act (RCW 42.52) through September 2027.


Larry Hoff, Chair

Date

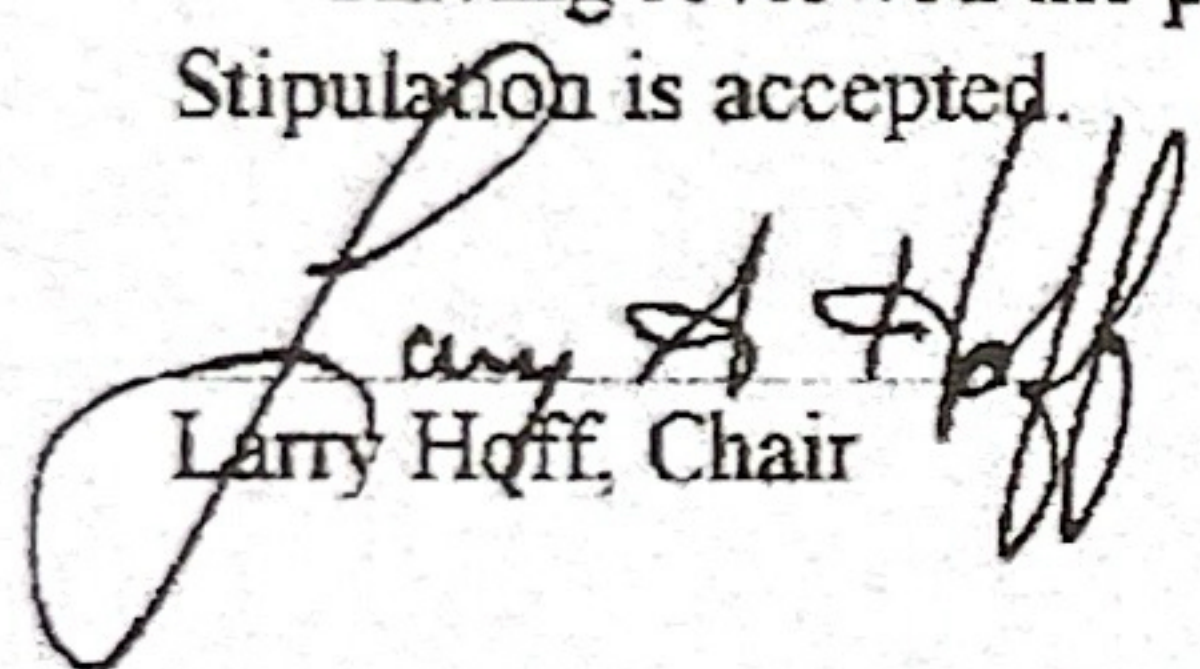
10/21/2025

I, Shaun Scott, hereby certify that I have read this Stipulation and Order in its entirety; that I have had the option of reviewing this agreement with legal counsel, or have actually reviewed it with legal counsel; fully understand its legal significance and consequence; agree to the entry of findings of fact and conclusions of law, and agree to personally sign it as a resolution of this matter and have voluntarily signed this Stipulation and Order.

Shaun Scott

Date

Having reviewed the proposed Stipulation, and on behalf of the Legislative Ethics Board, the Stipulation is accepted.


Larry Hoff, Chair

10/21/2025