

To: Commission

From: Jonathan Wayne, Executive Director

Date: May 2, 2022

Re: Materials for Appeal by Eric Rojo – Maine Clean Election Act Funding

We have attached the materials relating to the appeal by Eric Rojo of the staff determination denying him Maine Clean Election Act funding. We also wish to incorporate the staff memo, forms, guidance materials, and law included in agenda item #1, the appeal by Kathleen Shaw. We may seek to supplement these materials with additional information relating to the signatures on Cash Qualifying Contribution Affirmation forms cited in the staff determination.

Thank you for your consideration of these materials.



STATE OF MAINE COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENTAL ETHICS AND ELECTION PRACTICES 135 STATE HOUSE STATION AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0135

April 27, 2022

By E-Mail and Regular Mail

Mr. Eric Rojo 16 Cooks Corner Lincoln, ME 04457

Dear Mr. Rojo:

The staff of the Maine Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices ("the Commission") has completed its review of your request for certification as a Maine Clean Election Act (MCEA) candidate. We determined you submitted 140 valid qualifying contributions (QCs), which is less than the 175 required to receive MCEA funding. You have an opportunity to appeal this staff determination to the members of the Commission, as discussed in Section III.

I. Legal Requirements for MCEA Funding

Duty to Collect 175 QCs

Candidates for the Maine Senate must obtain QCs during the qualifying period from at least 175 verified registered voters from the candidate's Senate district. 21-A M.R.S. § 1125(3)(D)(3). A QC is defined as a donation:

A. Of \$5 or more in the form of cash, a check or a money order payable to the fund and signed by the contributor in support of a candidate or made over the Internet in support of a candidate according to the procedure established by the commission;

B. Made by a registered voter within the electoral division for the office a candidate is seeking and whose voter registration has been verified according to procedures established by the commission;

C. Made during the designated qualifying period; and

D. That the contributor acknowledges was made with the contributor's personal funds and in support of the candidate and was not given in exchange for anything of value and that the candidate acknowledges was obtained with the candidate's knowledge and approval and that nothing of value was given in exchange for the contribution, on forms provided by the commission.

21-A M.R.S. §§ 1122(7)(A)-(D).

For a QC made by check, cash, or money order to be valid, the contributor must sign a Receipt & Acknowledgement form to affirm they made the contribution with personal funds. 21-A M.R.S. §§ 1122(7)(D) & 1125(3-B). For QCs given by cash, the MCEA requires contributors to "sign a form prepared by the commission affirming that the contributor made the contribution with personal funds." 21-A M.R.S § 1125(3)(F).

Proof of Contributors' Voter Registration

Under the Commission's rules, a candidate's request for MCEA funding must include proof of the contributors' voter registration. 94-270 C.M.R. ch. 3, § 3(1)(A). The proof of registration must be received by the Commission within the qualifying period. The candidate must verify that each contributor is registered to vote in the candidate's legislative district through the Commission's online QC service or through written verification from the clerk in the contributor's municipality. 94-270 C.M.R. ch. 3, § 2(4)(F).

Deadline to Submit QCs, Voter Registration Verifications, and Receipt & Acknowledgement Forms by 5:00 p.m. on April 20, 2022

The candidate "must submit qualifying contributions, receipt and acknowledgement forms, proof of verification of voter registration ... during the qualifying period according to procedures developed by the commission" 21-A M.R.S. § 1125(4). For candidates for the State Senate, the qualifying period ends at 5:00 p.m. on April 20th of the election year. 21-A M.R.S § 1122(8)(B). Under the Chapter 3, Section (3)(1)(F) of the Commission Rules, the Commission and its staff may not grant extensions for a candidate to submit the QCs and verifications of voter registration.

Eric Rojo Page 3 April 27, 2022

II. Determination by Commission Staff

When your MCEA certification materials were submitted to the Commission on Wednesday, April 20th, the Commission's online QC service indicated you were submitting 205 QCs. The Commission staff has determined 65 of the QCs from this submission were invalid, and that you submitted a total number of 140 valid QCs.

Unverified Contributors

In the Commission's online QC service, you recorded contributor names and addresses for 183 contributors. 58 of the QCs are invalid because we did not receive confirmation that they are registered to vote in your senate district.

Aiken, Daniel Albert, John Albert, John Allen, Kylee Anthony, Jerry Auger, Mike Bard, Prisella Boulrisse, Jayleen Bragg, Katee Brawn, Glen *Brown, Robert Brown, Tom Cropley, Chevanne Cyr, Gerald St. Donahue, Mike Edwards, Holden Ewin, James Ferguson, Carolyn Fiske, Ben Gardner, Tom Gardner, William Gill, Priscilla Gray, Josh Hanscom, Emma Hanscom, Helen Hantley, Lanna Hawks, Larry Hesseltine, Maurice *Rojo, Eric

Ireland, Logan Jordan, Dakotah Jordan, John Kilbride, Stuart LeBlanc, Molly Lebrecque, Linda Legere, Monica Ludden, Doug Lumbra, Shephen McIntyer, Kerry McIntyer, Matthew McIntyer, Victoria McKay, Mary Nadeau, Chad Nicholson, Christina Ocana, Ted Paradis, Edward Pierre, Fernand St. Robinson, Jeffrey Savage, Charlie St.Pierre, Therese Stone, Deirdre Tardif, Jon Targon, Cody Willett, Todd Wolton, Derek York, Sam Young, Debra

*The QCs for Eric Rojo and Robert Brown are invalid for other reasons discussed below.

Eric Rojo Page 4 April 27, 2022

Duplicate Contributions

The Commission staff found duplicate QCs were made by three contributors in the materials submitted on April 20th. The Commission staff is counting only one QC for each contributor.

- Harry Epp gave two cash QCs one on March 9th and one on March 28th. The March 28th QC is invalid.
- Cody Porter made two QCs via the Commission's online QC service one on February 18th, and one on April 2nd. The April 2nd online QC is invalid.
- Eric Rojo made two QCs via the Commission's online QC service one on January 17th, and one on February 6th. The February 6th online QC is invalid.

Missing Cash Qualifying Contribution Affirmation Forms

The Cash Qualifying Contribution Affirmation form ("Cash QC form") is the form prepared by the Commission, as directed by 21-A M.R.S. § 1125(3)(F), for any contributor that makes a QC in cash. Your April 20th submission of qualifying materials was missing two Cash QC form, for Shey Gardner and Tyler Gardner.

Invalid Contributor Signatures

The Commission staff has determined that four of the submitted QCs are invalid because someone other than the contributor signed the contributor's name on the Cash QC Affirmation form submitted to the Commission. The signatures on the Cash QC Affirmation forms for these for contributors do not match their signatures on the Receipt & Acknowledgement Forms.

Robert Brown	Christopher Loupin
Michael King	Beverly Severance

We also compared the signatures to the contributors' actual signatures on their voter registration application card to the extent they were available to us. Because these four contributors did not sign the Cash QC Affirmation form as required by 21-A M.R.S. § 1125(3)(F), their QCs are not valid.

Eric Rojo Page 5 April 27, 2022

Conclusion

Even though you submitted 205 QCs with your Request for Certification, 65 QCs do not meet the legal requirements to be counted toward certification and the Commission staff has determined that your campaign submitted 140 valid QCs.

III. Your Right to Appeal

You have a right to appeal the staff determination to the members of the Commission, pursuant to 21-A M.R.S. § 1125(14). If you wish to do so, please submit the appeal, in writing, *within seven days*, addressed to:

William A. Lee III, Chair Maine Ethics Commission 135 State House Station Augusta, ME 04333-0135

You may file the appeal through U.S. Mail or other delivery service, by hand, or by email addressed to Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov. The Commission is required to hold a hearing to consider the appeal within five calendar days of receiving the appeal. The hearing would be held in accordance with the State Administrative Procedure Act (5 M.R.S. §§ 8001-11008). You would have the burden of proving that the Commission staff's decision was in error as a matter of law or was based on factual error. The Commission must rule on the appeal with five business days after the hearing. I am happy to answer any questions concerning the Commission staff's determination.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Wayne Executive Director

By E-Mail and Priority Mail

May 1, 2022

Eric Rojo 16 Cooks Corner Lincoln, Me. 04457

William A. Lee III, Chair Maine Ethics Commission 135 State House Station Augusta, Me. 04333-0135

Dear Mr. Lee,

I received your determination letter for the denial of my certification as a Maine Clean Election Act candidate for Maine Senate District 8. I would like to kindly ask for your reconsideration and explain what happened.

My campaign manager and I would first and foremost like to apologize for the honest mistake that we had presented to you. We did have enough qualifying contributions and signatures, but we honestly were not aware that we were responsible for taking them to be verified at each town office. We assumed when looking at the postings online that they were verified by the commission data base. Now looking back we see that some did not say "verified" beside them.

We have since acquired the verifications of 42 registered voters from the original list. Along with the original 140 validated contributions it would bring us above the 175 that are required.

We are basically admitting too an honest mistake and asking for your forgiveness. I am certainly ready for this entire process, I am eager to learn and I most definitely need assistance from the MCEA.

Please find attached the verified receipt and acknowledgement forms. I am sincerely sorry and would greatly appreciate your reconsideration.

Sincerely,

Eric Rojo

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8	NTRIBUTORS F	FROM THE TOW	CONTRIBUTORS FROM THE TOWN OR CITY OF: OLD TOWN	PAGE: 1 OF 1
	Date	System ID #	Contributor's Name	Residential Address
-	04/19/2022	208140	Edward Paradis	262 4th STREET, OLD TOWN, ME
(2)	04/14/2022	203323	Katee Bragg CK&he)	799 STILLWATER AVE, OLD TOWN, ME
3	04/14/2022	202934	Todd Willett	799 STILLWATER AVE, OLD TOWN, ME
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application. The contributors listed on this page have already submitted an electronic signature when they made the online contribution and are not required to sign the paper form. Please co tact the Commission staff at 287-4179 if you have any questions.

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8	NTRIBUTORS F	ROM THE TOW	CONTRIBUTORS FROM THE TOWN OR CITY OF: MILFORD	PAGE: 1 OF 1
Ц	Date	System ID #	Contributor's Name	Residential Address
-	04/19/2022	208139	John Jordan	104 CALL RD, MILFORD, ME
n	04/14/2022	202667	Ben Fiske	6 HASKELL WOODS TRAILER PARK, MILFORD, ME
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ð	CANDIDATE'S NAME: Eric Rojo	ME: Eric Rojo		OFFICE: C House K Senate C Governor DISTRICT # 8
8	NTRIBUTORS F	ROM THE TOW	CONTRIBUTORS FROM THE TOWN OR CITY OF: WINN	PAGE: 1 OF 1
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-	04/14/2022	202610	John Albert	328 RT 168, WINN, ME
N	04/14/2022	202609	John Albert	300 RT 168, WINN, ME
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S	CANDIDATE'S NAME: Eric Rojo	ME: Eric Rojo		OFFICE: D House KI Senate	C Governor DISTRICT #: 8
8	NTRIBUTORS F	FROM THE TOW	CONTRIBUTORS FROM THE TOWN OR CITY OF: LEE	PAGE: 1 OF 1	
	Date	System ID #	Contributor's Name	Resid	Residential Address
1-1	04/15/2022	204460	Jayleen Boulrisse	35 EMERSON DR, LEE, ME	ME
n	04/15/2022	204144	James Ewing	2386 LEE RD, LEE, ME	
(0)	04/14/2022	202987	Mike Auger	216 SOUTH RD, LEE, ME	
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3	CANDIDATE'S NAME: Eric Rojo	ME: Eric Rojo		OFFICE: ☐ House
ŏ	ONTRIBUTORS	FROM THE TOW	CONTRIBUTORS FROM THE TOWN OR CITY OF: LINCOLN	PAGE: 2 OF 3
	Date	System ID #	Contributor's Name	Residential Address
-	04/14/2022	202998	Maurice Hesseltine	1333 LEE RD, LINCOLN, ME
5	04/14/2022	202900	Tom Gardner	30 GARDNER RD, LINCOLN, ME
~	04/14/2022	202889	Cody Targon	861 ENFIELD RD, LINCOLN, ME
4	04/14/2022	202888	Prisoilla Gill	15 HALE ST, LINCOLN, ME
6	5) 04/14/2022	202885	Emma Hanscom	5 CLAY ST, LINCOLN, ME
6)	04/14/2022	202802	Therese St. Pierre	740 MOHAWK RD, LINCOLN, ME
5	04/14/2022	202762	Dakotah Jordan	32 AYER ST, LINCOLN, ME
(8)	04/14/2022	202758	Shephen Lumbra	257 WHITE POINT ESTATES RD, LINCOLN, ME
۲	04/14/2022	202746	Lanna Hantley Hartlev	1081 MAIN ST, LINCOLN, ME
9	04/14/2022	202743	Jerry Anthony	18 MATTANAWCOOK ST, LINCOLN, ME
Ð	04/14/2022	202733	Tom Brown	2 MOUNTAINVIEW DR, LINCOLN, ME
12	04/14/2022	202721	Ted Ocana	433 ENFIELD RD, LINCOLN, ME
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8	INTRIBUTORS I	FROM THE TOW	CONTRIBUTORS FROM THE TOWN OR CITY OF: LINCOLN	PAGE: 3 OF 3
	Date	System ID #	Contributor's Name	Residential Address
\odot	04/14/2022	202695	Larry Hawks HOWKES	71 PHINNEY, LINCOLN, ME
2	04/14/2022	202691	Debra Young	149 FROST ST, LINCOLN, ME
3	04/14/2022	202684	Mike Donahue	58 LEE RD, LINCOLN, ME
۲	04/14/2022	202682	Jon Tardif	556 ENFIELD RD, LINCOLN, ME
۲	04/14/2022	202643	Doug Ludden	517 ENFIELD RD, LINCOLN, ME
6	04/14/2022	202623	Daniel Alken	49 W BROADWAY, LINCOLN, ME
\odot	04/14/2022	202597	Linda Lebrecque Labrecque	728 LEE RD, LINCOLN, ME
(9)	04/14/2022	202593	Prisella Bard	19 E BROADWAY, LINCOLN, ME
6	04/14/2022	202587	William Gardner	55 STANHOPE MILL RD, LINCOLN, ME
6	02/06/2022	175393	eric rojo	16 COOKS COR, LINCOLN, ME
\odot	01/17/2022	172409	eric rojo	16 COOKS COR, LINCOLN, ME
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þ tact the Commission staff at 287-4179 if you have any questions.

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8	NTRIBUTOR	S FROM THE TOW	CONTRIBUTORS FROM THE TOWN OR CITY OF: LINCOLN	PAGE: 1 OF 3
	Date	System ID #	Contributor's Name	Residential Address
-	04/19/2022	208143	Gerald St. Cyr	367 WHITE POINT ESTATES RD, LINCOLN, ME
3	04/19/2022	208137	Stuart Kilbride	403 W BROADWAY, LINCOLN, ME
3	04/16/2022	205043	Deirdre Stone	879 LEE RD, LINCOLN, ME
•	04/16/2022	205040	Kylee Allen	149 FROST ST, LINCOLN, ME
9	04/14/2022	203333	Fernand St. Pierre	740 MOHAWK RD, LINCOLN, ME
9	04/14/2022	203316	Jeffery Robinson	405 ENFIELD RD, LINCOLN, ME
~	04/14/2022	203080	Helen Hanscom	4 VILLAGE CIR, LINCOLN, ME
(8)	04/14/2022	203075	Carolyn Ferguson	24 CAMDEN DR, LINCOLN, ME
۲	04/14/2022	203072	Mary McKay	22 CAMDEN DR, LINCOLN, ME
	04/14/2022	203067	Glen Brawn	212 ENFIELD RD, LINCOLN, ME
9	04/14/2022	203052	Josh Gray	728 HALF TOWNSHIP RD, LINCOLN, ME
12	04/14/2022	202999	Cheyanne Cropley	119 PHINNEY FARM RD, LINCOLN, ME
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8	NTRIBUTORS F	FROM THE TOW	CONTRIBUTORS FROM THE TOWN OR CITY OF: ENFIELD	PAGE: 1 OF 1
	Date	System ID #	Contributor's Name	Residential Address
-	04/16/2022	205034	Charlie Savage (('norles))	305 MOHAWK RD, ENFIELD, ME
2	04/15/2022	204462	Robert Brown	1181 MAIN RD, ENFIELD, ME Address no match
~	04/14/2022	203081	Sam York (SUMUEL)	31 EMERSON ST, ENFIELD, ME
4	04/14/2022	202982	Chad Nadeau ((1 usher (had Nadraw))	23 DODLIN RD, ENFIELD, ME
40	04/14/2022	202905	Logan Ireland	36 DARLING ESTS, ENFIELD, ME
9	04/14/2022	202638	Monica Legere	456 HAMMETT RD, ENFIELD, ME ACICIY'SS YD MCHCh
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8	NTRIBUTORS I	FROM THE TOW	CONTRIBUTORS FROM THE TOWN OR CITY OF: LOWELL	PAGE: 1 OF 1
Ć	Date	System ID #	Contributor's Name	Residential Address
-	04/14/2022	202675	Kerry Melintyer MCLATANEC	78 TANNERY RD, LOWELL, ME
N	04/14/2022	202672	Mathew Melnityer MCINTUCC	78 TANNERY RD, LOWELL, ME
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tact the Commission staff at 287-4179 if you have any questions.

I have verified that <u>contributors circled above are registered to</u> vote in the electoral division of the candidate. 200 2 7 I have verified that ò Date:

7 Signature of Registrar.

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To: Candidates for the Maine State Senate, District 8

cc: Commission Members and Counsel

From: Jonathan Wayne, Executive Director

Date: May 2, 2022

NOTICE OF HEARING

Hearing Scheduled for May 6, 2022

On April 26, 2022, the staff of the Maine Ethics Commission completed its review of a request for Maine Clean Election Act funding by Mr. Eric Rojo, a candidate for the Maine State Senate, District 8. The Commission staff found that Mr. Rojo did not submit 175 valid qualifying contributions during the qualifying period. Specifically, the Commission found a total of 58 qualifying contributions were invalid because no confirmation that they are registered to vote in the Senate district was submitted; three contributors made two contributions; the submission did not include two Cash Qualifying Contribution (QC) Affirmation forms; and four signatures on the Cash QC Affirmation forms for these four contributors do not match their signatures on the Receipt & Acknowledgement forms. For these reasons, the Commission staff determined Mr. Rojo did not meet the requirements to receive Maine Clean Election Act funding under 21-A M.R.S. § 1125(5).

Mr. Rojo has appealed the staff determination. Pursuant to 21-A M.R.S. § 1125(14), the Commission will hold a hearing on her appeal, with the agreement of the appellant, on **Friday, May 6, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.** The hearing will be held at the Commission office at **45 Memorial Circle, in Augusta.** The hearing will be streamed to YouTube for the public to access.

The May 6, 2022 hearing will be conducted in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Commission's rules (available at www.maine.gov/ethics) and the Maine Administrative Procedure Act, 5 M.R.S. §§ 8001 et seq.

Issue to be Addressed at the Hearings

At the hearing, Mr. Rojo will have the burden of proving that the determination by the Commission staff was in error as a matter of law or was based on factual error. The members of the Commission are expected to reach a decision in the matter as part of the hearing.

Opportunity to Present Evidence and Legal Argument

The appellant, the Commission staff, and any intervenors may present evidence and legal argument at the May 6, 2022 hearing.

Subpoenas

Any requests to the Commission for issuance of subpoenas under 5 M.R.S. § 9060 should be made as soon as possible. Requests should be addressed to the Commission Chair and emailed to Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov.

Relevant Statutes and Rules

The following provisions are relevant to the proceeding:

21-A M.R.S. § 1122(7) & (8)
21-A M.R.S. § 1125(3), (3-B), (4), (5) & (14)
Commission Rules, Chapter 3, Sections 2(4) & 3(1)

Applications to Intervene as a Party

Any person who wishes to intervene as a party to the proceeding should submit a letter to the Commission as soon as possible. Please address the letter to Commission Chair and email the letter to Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov.

Questions

If you have any questions concerning this notice, please call me at (207) 287-4179 or e-mail me at Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov.