



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

To: Commissioners
From: Martha Currier, Assistant Director
Date: September 11, 2024
Re: Bright Future Maine – Waiver Request

The Bright Future Maine PAC (the PAC) was required to file a 2-Day Pre-Primary Independent Expenditure (IE) Report no later than May 30, 2024, but filed the report 71 days late on August 9. The PAC is seeking a waiver of the \$6,411.30 preliminary penalty.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Any person, party committee, political committee or political action committee that makes any independent expenditure more than \$250 per candidate must file a report within 2 days from the 60th day through the 14th day before an election. 94-270 C.M.R. Ch. 1 § 10(3)(B)(2). If a person is late in filing the report, the amount of the penalty is set by a formula which takes into consideration a percentage of the total contributions or expenditures, whichever is greater, the number of prior violations within a two-year period, and the number of days the report is late. 21-A M.R.S. § 1020-A(4-A).

DISCUSSION AND STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The PAC registered with the Commission in January 2024. The treasurer, Eliza Woodcock, has been previously involved with registered candidates and PACs with the Commission and but has not needed to file IE reports in the past. The expenditure that triggered the IE report was made on May 28, which required a report to be filed by May 30. However, due to a data-entry error the expenditure was reported as a regular transaction on the PACs 11-Day Pre-Primary Report, which was timely filed on May 31, 2024.

Based on the statutory formula for calculating late-filing penalties, the preliminary penalty amount is \$6,411.30, calculated as follows:

Report	Deadline	Financial Activity	Penalty Rate	Days Late	Preliminary Penalty
2-Day Pre-Primary IE Report	5/30/2024	\$4,515	2%	71	\$6,411.30

The PAC seeks a waiver of the penalty because this was an honest mistake that had no ill-intent. Ms. Woodcock thought she had reported the expenditure properly and it wasn't until it was brought to her attention in August that she realized her error. She immediately contacted Commission staff on August 8 and promptly filed the IE report on August 9, 2024.

IE reports are considered essential for public awareness prior to general elections. Without these reports, any interested member of the press, public, or candidate campaigns would need to wade through thousands of transactions on reports covering greater lengths of time, to determine if any candidate supporting or opposing purchases had been made. Although the expenditure that triggered the IE was not filed timely, it was included on the regular campaign finance report filed in May.

There have not been many requests for waivers of late IE reports in recent years. However, in instances where the PAC self-identifies a bona fide mistake and contacts the Commission staff to correct its error, the Commission has reduced, but not eliminated the preliminary penalty. Given the factors in this case, Commission staff recommends reducing the penalty to \$375.

August 24, 2024

Maine Ethics Commission
Attn: Martha Currier
135 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Ms. Currier,

I am requesting a waiver or reduction on the fine for Bright Future Maine for the late IE report. While I have spent many years working in politics, I have little experience being the Treasurer for a PAC that makes independent expenditures.

When I entered the information about the expenditures supporting the candidacy of Scott Cyrway, I mistakenly selected "expenditures" instead of "independent expenditures." Because there was the option to say whether this expenditure was to support or oppose a candidate, I didn't realize I had clicked the wrong category. I entered the information about the expenditure supporting Scott Cyrway and filed it as part of the 11-Day Pre-Primary Report. I later amended the report when we got a new invoice.

I did not realize that I had done anything wrong until someone alerted me that I had made an error in August – 71 days late. When I went to check the reports I had filed, I realized that I had indeed made an error. I reached out to you at the Ethics Commission to see if there was anything I could do to rectify this error. I was told to log in to my account and change the category from expenditures to independent expenditures.

There was no intent to hide these expenditures, as evidenced by the fact that I filed the original report with the expenditure information. Additionally, I brought my error to Ethics' attention and tried to rectify it as soon as I was made aware of it.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Eliza Woodcock
Treasurer, Bright Future Maine



Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices
Mail: 135 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333
Office: 45 Memorial Circle, Augusta, Maine
Website: www.maine.gov/ethics
Phone: 207-287-4179
Fax: 207-287-6775

2024 INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE REPORT

COMMITTEE		TREASURER	
Bright Future Maine 36 Farvue Avenue Bangor, ME 04401 PHONE: (207) 209-0459 EMAIL: eliza.woodcock@gmail.com		Eliza Woodcock 35 Farvue Avenue Bangor, ME 04401 PHONE:(207) 209-0459 EMAIL: eliza.woodcock@gmail.com	
REPORT	DUE DATE	REPORTING PERIOD	
2-Day Pre-Primary Independent Expenditure Report	05/30/2024	05/28/2024-05/28/2024	

FINANCIAL ACTIVITY SUMMARY

EXPENDITURES	
Total independent expenditures greater than \$250 per candidate	\$4,515.00
Total independent expenditures of \$250 or less per candidate	\$0.00
Total independent expenditures for all candidates	\$4,515.00

AFFIRMATION

I, Eliza Woodcock affirm that each of the expenditures listed in this report was made independently of, and not in cooperation, consultation, or concert with, or at the request or suggestion of, the candidate(s) named or in a race affected by any expenditure in the report, the political committee of the candidate(s), or their agents.

Unsworn falsification is a Class D crime. 17-A M.R.S. § 453

REPORT FILED BY: Eliza Woodcock
REPORT FILED ON: 8/9/2024 8:31:01 PM
LAST MODIFIED:
COMMITTEE ID: 484652
REPORT NUMBER: 35882

**SCHEDULE B-IE-1
CANDIDATE(S) SUPPORTED/OPPOSED**

Expenditure Date	Support / Oppose	Candidate Name	Office	District / County	Payee	Expenditure Amount
5/28/2024	SUPPORT	Hon. Scott Wynn Cyrway	Senator	16	LFD Strategies LLC	\$2,515.00
5/28/2024	SUPPORT	Hon. Scott Wynn Cyrway	Senator	16	LFD Strategies LLC	\$2,000.00
Total itemized independent expenditures greater than \$250 per candidate						\$4,515.00
Total unitemized independent expenditures of \$250 or less per candidate						\$0.00
Total independent expenditures for all candidates						\$4,515.00

**SCHEDULE B-IE-2
EXPENDITURES**

EXPENDITURE TYPES				
APP	Apparel (t-shirts, hats, embroidery, etc.)	CON	Contribution to party committee, non-profit, other candidate, etc.	
EQP	Equipment of \$50 or more (computer, tablet, phone, furniture, etc.)	EVT	Campaign and fundraising events (venue or booth rental, entertainment, supplies, etc.)	
FOD	Food for campaign events or volunteers, catering	HRD	Hardware and small tools (hammer, nails, lumber, paint, etc.)	
LIT	Printed campaign materials (palmcards, signs, stickers, flyers, etc.)	MHS	Mail house and direct mail (design, printing, mailing, and postage all included)	
NEW	Newspaper and print media ads only	OFF	Office supplies, rent, utilities, internet service, phone minutes and data	
ONL	Social media and online advertising only	OTH	Other and fees (bank, contribution, and money order fees, etc.)	
PER	Personnel and campaign staff, consulting, and independent contractor costs	PHO	Phones (phone banking, robocalls and texts)	
POL	Polling and survey research	POS	Postage for U.S. Mail and mail box fees	
PRO	Professional services (graphic design, legal services, web design, etc.)	RAD	Radio ads, production costs	
TKT	Entrance cost to event (ban suppers, fairs, party events, etc.)	TRV	Travel (fuel, mileage, lodging, etc.)	
TVN	TV/cable ads, production, and media buyer costs only	WEB	Website and internet costs (website domain and registration, etc.)	
Date of expenditure	Payee	Remark	Expenditure type	Net Amount
5/28/2024	LFD Strategies LLC 14 PINE LEDGE DRIVE SCARBOROUGH, ME, 04074	Ad placement - streaming and programming.	ONL	\$2,515.00
5/28/2024	LFD Strategies LLC 14 PINE LEDGE DRIVE SCARBOROUGH, ME, 04074	Ad production - digital ad.	ONL	\$2,000.00
Total Expenditure				\$4,515.00

Aube, Julie

From: Currier, Martha
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2024 9:11 AM
To: Eliza Woodcock
Subject: RE: Questions about PAC filing

You need to file the separate IE report:

ING ALL Please enter minimum 3 characters to search + NEW TRANSACTION

Contributions
Expenditures
Independent Expenditures
Loans
Debts

You are working on behalf of Bright Future Maine.

Independent Expenditures

Payee	Payee Type	Purpose	Date	Amount	Action
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The top 3 funders is a required disclaimer on IEs, not a website. If you or the someone have additional questions let me know.

Martha

From: Eliza Woodcock <eliza.woodcock@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2024 9:00 AM
To: Currier, Martha <Martha.Currier@maine.gov>
Subject: Questions about PAC filing

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning,

It has come to my attention that I unintentionally made an error in one of the campaign finance reports for the Bright Future Maine PAC. The two expenditures to LFD Properties made on 5/28 should have been filed as independent expenditures, not just expenditures.

Is there a way to rectify this? If I delete the old entries and then re-add them, it will be past the disclosure deadline date.

Additionally, does the PAC's website need to disclose the top 3 donors? It doesn't advocate for/against a candidate but someone told us it needed that information. Here is a link to the website: <https://www.brightfuturemaine.com/>

Thank you,

Eliza

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Eliza Woodcock
[\(207\) 209-0459](tel:(207)209-0459)



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

August 12, 2024

Ms. Eliza Woodcock, Treasurer
Bright Future Maine
38 Farvue Avenue
Bangor, ME 04401

Re: Late Filing of 24-Hour Report

Dear Ms. Woodcock:

The Commission staff has made a finding that the Bright Maine Future PAC was late in filing its Independent Expenditure Report regarding the communications made to support Rep. Cyrway's state senate campaign. The report was due by 11:59 p.m. on May 30, 2024, but was not filed until August 9, 2024. Under the Commission's statutes, the late filing of a report triggers an enforcement process. (21-A M.R.S. § 1020-A). Based on the amount of financial activity in the report, the number of calendar days the report was late, and the history of violations from the committee, the Commission staff has determined a penalty of \$6,411.30 is owed.

The committee may make a written request that the Commission waive the violation or penalty in whole or in part. Any request for a waiver must be made within 14 calendar days of your receipt of this notice; it must be in writing and contain a full explanation of the reasons the committee filed late. Upon receipt, staff will schedule your appeal for the next public meeting of the Commission.

The Commission may waive the penalty if it determines the report was late due to mitigating circumstances, which are defined as (1) a valid emergency; (2) an error made by the Commission staff; or (3) relevant evidence the committee made a bona fide effort to file the report on time. Also, the Commission may waive the penalty if it is disproportionate to the level of experience of the person filing the report or the harm suffered by the public from the late disclosure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Martha Currier".

Martha Currier
Assistant Director

Committee Name: Bright Maine Future

Prior Violations: 0

Report Name	Activity Amount	Due Date	Days Late	Penalty Rate	Penalty
Independent Expenditure Report (Cyrway)	\$4,515	5/30/2024	71	2%	\$6,411.30

The penalty for late filing of a required report is a percentage of the total contributions or expenditures for the filing period, whichever is greater, multiplied by the number of calendar days the report is filed late, as follows:

For the first violation, 2%

For the second violation, 4%

For the third and each subsequent violation, 6%

A penalty begins to accrue at 11:59 p.m. on the day the report is due.

A required report sent by certified or registered United States mail and postmarked at least 2 days before the deadline is not subject to penalty.

Violations accumulate on reports with filing deadlines in a 2-year period that begins on January 1st of each even-numbered year. Waiver of a penalty does not nullify the finding of a violation.

Commission Penalty Decisions - PACs, BQCs, Party Committees (2018 - present)

Committee Name	Requested Waivers of Late-Filing Penalties	Preliminary Penalty	Final Penalty	Commission Meeting Date
Waiver Requests				
Maine United Auto Workers PAC	Late January Quarterly	\$400.00	\$400.00	04/25/18
Maine Health Care Assoc. PAC	Late 24-Hour Report	\$2,760.00	\$500.00	08/29/18
Fecteau Leadership PAC	Late 24-Hour Report	\$400.00	\$400.00	08/29/18
New Mainers PAC	Late 24-Hour Report	\$10,000.00	\$1,000.00	03/06/19
Senate Democratic Campaign Committee	Late January Quarterly	\$1,010.50	\$750.00	04/24/19
Unite Portland PAC (<i>Municipal</i>)	Late IE Report	\$5,000.00	\$1,250.00	12/18/19
Unite Portland PAC (<i>Municipal</i>)	Late IE Report	\$2,052.16	\$750.00	12/18/19
Women's Leadership Fund PAC	Late IE Report	\$100.00	\$50.00	08/11/20
Maine Truck PAC	Late 24-Hour Report	\$2,203.08	\$500.00	10/16/20
Revive Hometown Maine PAC	Late October Quarterly	\$510.00	\$250.00	10/30/20
Mainers for Health and Parental Rights	Late 24-Hour Report	\$980.00	\$750.00	01/27/21
Kittery Democratic Committee	Late 11-Day Pre-General Report	\$500.00	\$100.00	02/24/21
Madison Republican Committee of Maine	Late 11-Day Pre-General Report	\$500.00	\$100.00	02/24/21
York Town Republican Committee	Late 11-Day Pre-General Report	\$500.00	\$100.00	02/24/21
Energy PAC for Maine	Late 24-Hour Report	\$8,840.00	\$750.00	03/31/21
Protect Maine Elections	Late Initial Report	\$1,004.00	\$750.00	10/29/21
Mainers for Local Power PAC	Late 24-Hour Report	\$300,000.00	\$25,000.00	02/28/22
Mainers for Local Power PAC	Late 24-Hour Report	\$98,500.00	\$10,000.00	02/28/22
No on 3: Right to Food is Wrong for Maine	Late 24-Hour Report (3)	\$932.00	\$300.00	02/28/22
Piscataquis County Republican Committee	Late January Semiannual Report	\$500.00	\$100.00	03/30/22
Waldo County Democratic Committee	2022 July Semiannual Report	\$181.21	\$60.40	09/28/22
Lincoln County Republican Committee	2022 July Semiannual Report	\$500.00	\$100.00	09/28/22
American Leadership Committee-Maine PAC	Late IE report Oct. Quarterly Report	\$679.88	\$679.88	11/30/22
Planned Parenthood Maine Action Fund	Late IE report	\$2,433.60	\$750.00	11/30/22
We the People PAC	Late IE report	\$5,000.00	\$1,000.00	11/30/22
We the People PAC	Late IE report	\$99.96	\$99.96	11/30/22
Steve LaFreniere	Late IE Report	\$1,090.00	\$200.00	12/21/22
York Voter Alliance	Late IE report	\$672.61	\$200.00	12/21/22
Androscoggin County Democratic Committee	Late 11-Day Pre-General Report	\$99.94	\$99.94	12/21/22
Aroostook County Republican Committee	Late 11-Day Pre-General Report	\$500.00	\$100.00	01/30/23
Aroostook County Republican Committee	Late 24-Hour Report	\$120.00	\$120.00	01/30/23
Maine AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education PAC	Late 24-Hour Report	\$4,860.00	\$750.00	02/28/23
Maine United Auto Workers Council PAC	Two Late 24-Hour Reports	\$4,900.00	\$1,000.00	02/28/23
American Leadership Committee-Maine PAC	Late 42-Day Post-General Report	\$55,654.00	\$2,500.00	05/31/23
We the People PAC	Late 11 day Pre-special election report	\$1,147.50	\$400.00	08/23/23
Star City PAC	Late 11 day Pre-special election report	\$370.50	\$150.00	08/23/23

Late Major Contributor Decisions				
Committee Name	Violation	Preliminary Penalty	Final Penalty	Commission Meeting Date
Waiver requests				
Mainers for Local Power PAC	Late Major Contributor (2)	\$53,431.15	\$2,500.00	03/10/20
Maine Street Solutions - Protect Schools BQC	Late Major Contributor	\$25,000.00	\$2,000.00	05/27/20
Clean Energy Matters PAC	Late Major Contributor Notice	\$50,000.00	\$2,500.00	03/31/21
We the People PAC	Late Major Contributor Notice	\$11,500.00	\$2,500.00	05/26/21
Mainers for Local Power PAC	Late Major Contributor Notice	\$13,786.32	\$2,500.00	08/23/21
Maine Energy Progress	Late Major Contributor Notice	\$25,768.87	\$3,000.00	11/29/23
Dorman Products	Late Major Contributor Report	\$15,000	\$5,000.00	11/29/23
Maine Automotive Right to Repair	Late Major Contributor Notices (6)	\$240,000.00	\$35,000.00	11/29/23
Genuine Parts Company	Late Major Contributor Report	\$50,000.00	\$5,000.00	01/31/24
Our Power	Two Late Major Contributor Notices	\$28,155	\$6,000.00	02/27/24
Citizens for a Bright Future	Late Registration, late filing, lack of disclaimer	\$3,866	\$300.00	05/29/24
Planned Parenthood Maine Action Fund	Late IE Report	\$734	\$400.00	05/29/24
Bangor Fire Fighters PAC Fund	Late to update their registration	\$250.00	\$0.00	05/29/24
Other Enforcement Decisions - Committees				
Committee Name	Violation	Preliminary Penalty	Final Penalty	Commission Meeting Date
Other Violations				
Sara Gideon Leadership PAC	Contributions Made in Name of Another		\$500.00	10/30/19
Working Families PAC	Failure to file 2020 October Quarterly; 11-Day Pre-General, 42-Day Post-General, and 2021 January Quarterly and April Quarterly campaign finance reports		\$3,750.00	05/26/21
Mainers for Fair Laws BQC	Missing Disclaimers in television ads		\$2,500.00	09/29/21
Working Families PAC	Over the limit contribution to Diane Russell senate campaign		\$285.00	09/29/21
American Leadership Committee-Maine PAC	Missing top three donors		\$10,000.00	11/30/22
Building the Maine House	Late 11-day Pre-Primary Report		\$0.00	07/24/24

**Memo to Commissioners re: Bright Future Maine PAC Waiver Request –
Text of Legal Authority Cited in Memo in order Referenced**

94-270 C.M.R. Ch. 1 § 10(3)(B)(2)

Chapter 1: Procedures

SECTION 10. Reports of Independent Expenditures

3. Reporting Schedules. Independent expenditures in excess of \$250 per candidate per election made by any person, party committee, political committee or political action committee must be reported to the Commission in accordance with the following schedule:

B(2) Two-Day Report. From the 60th day through the 14th day before an election, a report must be filed within two calendar days of the expenditure

21-A M.R.S. § 1020-A(4-A)

Chapter 13: Campaign Finance Reports

§ 1020-A. Failure to file on time

4-A. Basis for penalties. The penalty for late filing of a report required under this subchapter is a percentage of the total contributions or expenditures for the filing period, whichever is greater, multiplied by the number of calendar days late, as follows:

- A. For the first violation, 2%;
- B. For the 2nd violation, 4%; and
- C. For the 3rd and subsequent violations, 6%.

Any penalty of less than \$25 is waived.

Violations accumulate on reports with filing deadlines in a 2-year period that begins on January 1st of each even-numbered year. Waiver of a penalty does not nullify the finding of a violation.

A report required to be filed under this subchapter that is sent by certified or registered United States mail and postmarked at least 2 days before the deadline is not subject to penalty.