



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Complaint Filed Against Republican Dark Money Group Funding Attack Ad on Fung's Behalf

Providence, RI—The Rhode Island Democratic Party today submitted a complaint to the Rhode Island Board of Elections concerning the Government Integrity Fund, Inc., which is a major funding source for the Mid America Fund, for failing to file donor disclosure reports as required by law. The Mid America Fund has been airing attack ads on behalf of Republican Allan Fung in Rhode island for nearly a week without these proper disclosures.

The Democratic Party is requesting that the Board of Elections immediately issue an order demanding that the Government Integrity Fund file a covered transfer report. If it fails to do so, the board should impose the maximum civil penalty allowed by law.

“Republican Mayor Allan Fung should immediately denounce this shadowy organization from supporting his campaign and demand that they comply with the law,” said Peter Baptista.

“Today he is campaigning with one of the architects of this ad in New Jersey Governor and RGA Chairman Chris Christie and it’s disturbing that the Mayor is tolerating this lack of transparency.”

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Attachment

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Richard H. Pierce, Chairman
Rhode Island Board of Elections
50 Branch Ave.
Providence, RI 02904

Dear Chairman Pierce,

On October 20, 2014, the Government Integrity Fund, an out-of-state dark money group, transferred \$435,000 to the Mid America Fund to air false attack ads against Gina Raimondo. State law requires entities like the Government Integrity Fund to file donor disclosure reports within 24 hours of making these "covered transfers," so that the public is fully apprised of who is funding the ads. See R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-25.3-1. But, eight days later, the Government Integrity Fund has failed to file the report. According to WPRI, the Government Integrity Fund is "the only one of the five organizations funding major independent expenditures in the race for governor that hasn't disclosed its donors, with barely a week to go before the election." See <http://wpri.com/2014/10/27/donors-backing-anti-raimondo-group-still-a-mystery/>. Each of the "other key outside groups ... have all filed documents detailing their backers," as the law requires. *Id.*

The Board of Elections should immediately issue an order demanding that the Government Integrity Fund file a covered transfer report disclosing its donors. If it fails to do so, the Board should impose the maximum civil penalty allowed by law – which is \$652,500, 150 percent of the transferred amount. The Government Integrity Fund, like other dark money groups, "can skirt IRS rules designed to limit their political activities" and has a history of engaging in electoral activities in other states without disclosing donors. See <http://www.propublica.org/article/what-happens-when-a-dark-money-group-blows-off-irs-rules-nothing>. This type of behavior was precisely what Rhode Island had in mind when it passed one of the nation's strongest disclosure laws in 2012. That legislation was designed to put an end to secret spending to influence elections and force these dark money groups into the light by requiring donor disclosure. The Board must act quickly, before the election, to uphold the integrity of Rhode Island's strong disclosure law and send a message to out-of-state dark money groups that their shenanigans will not be tolerated in Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Boucher", written over a circular stamp or watermark.

Jonathan Boucher
Executive Director
Rhode Island Democratic Party