

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

In the Matter of Complaint by Steven Sheinberg, Fairfield

File No. 2024-041

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This complaint was brought by the chairman of the Democratic Town Committee pursuant to General Statutes § 9-7b. Alexis Harrison, a candidate for Connecticut House of Representatives, District 132, and Loretta Chory, “Harrison for the 132nd” candidate committee treasurer (hereinafter “Respondents”) were alleged to have made an impermissible coordinated expenditure. After an investigation of the complaint, the Commission makes the following findings and conclusions:

Complaint

1. On or about May 20, 2024, the Commission received the above-captioned complaint.
2. On or about June 26, 2024, the Commission voted it necessary to investigate the complaint.
3. The complainant alleges that the Respondents, on or about May 6, 2025, made an impermissible coordinated expenditure in opposition to the campaign of Jennifer Leeper.

Applicable Law

4. General Statutes § 9-601b provides in pertinent part:

(a) As used in this chapter and chapter 157, the term “expenditure” means:

(2) Any communication that (A) refers to one or more clearly identified candidates, and (B) is broadcast by radio, television, other than on a public access channel, or by satellite communication or via the Internet, or as a paid-for telephone communication, or appears in a newspaper, magazine or on a billboard, or is sent by mail;

...

(b) The term “expenditure” does not mean:

(7) A communication described in subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this section that includes speech or expression made (A) prior to

the ninety-day period preceding the date of a primary or an election at which the clearly identified candidate or candidates are seeking nomination to public office or position, that is made for the purpose of influencing any legislative or administrative action, as defined in section 1-91, or executive action, or (B) during a legislative session for the purpose of influencing legislative action.

Investigation & Analysis

5. Upon investigation the Commission determines that Ms. Harrison was a co-founder and member of the advocacy group, CT169Strong.
6. Evidence shows that Ms. Harrison filed paperwork on or about April 10, 2024, to register as a candidate for the 132nd District election for the Connecticut House of Representatives. This registration listed Ms. Chory as her candidate committee treasurer.
7. Upon investigation the Commission determines that on May 6, 2024, CT169Strong sent out a communication via email to its mailing list. The subject of the email reads, “DesegregateCT Bill passed in House; going to Senate.” The email is several pages long (11 when printed out) the vast majority of which discuss reasons to oppose HB 5390 (“Bill”), and the actions people can take; including sending petitions and contacting their state senators.¹
8. One section of the communication mentions proponents of the Bill, including State Representative Jennifer Leeper, the incumbent who would be Ms. Harrison’s opponent at the November 5, 2024 election. Another section lists a photo of the vote tally for the Bill, and includes in bold letters, “REMEMBER IN NOVEMBER, THIS IS THE VOTE TALLY IN THE HOUSE! VOTE SMART IN 2024...”
9. The Commission finds that this communication was made 183 days prior to the November 5, 2024 election. The Commission also finds that it was made during a legislative session.²
10. The Commission further finds that, while the communication references a potential candidate and the November election, the overwhelming subject matter is regarding the contents of Bill 5390 and the legislative actions that should be taken. The language regarding the Bill, combined with the timing of the email - two days before the end of session - and its call to action requesting readers to contact their legislators all weigh in

¹ At the time of this communication HB 5390 had passed the House and was pending a Senate vote.

² In 2024, the Connecticut State Legislature convened on February 7th and adjourned on May 8th.

favor of finding the communication not to be an election related expenditure (See *Markley v. State Elections Enforcement Commission*, 349 Conn. 67, 109 - 118 (2024)).


11. As the communication was made prior to 90 days before an election and for the purpose of influencing legislative action, the Commission determines that it does not qualify as an expenditure. (Nor would it due to the fact it was made during a legislative session.)
12. Based upon Ms. Harrison's role within the organization at the time the communication was made,³ it seems highly likely the communication would be found to have been coordinated; however, the Commission will not investigate this matter further as the threshold question of whether the communication was an expenditure has been answered in the negative.
13. Based upon the foregoing, the Commission concludes that no impermissible coordinated expenditure was made and that no violation has occurred.
14. The Commission, under the narrow and specific circumstances detailed herein, dismisses this matter as the allegations were not supported by the facts or the law after investigation.

ORDER

The following Order is recommended on the basis of the aforementioned findings:

That the Commission dismisses this matter.

Adopted this 16th day of April, 2025 at Hartford, Connecticut.



Stephen T. Penny, Chairman
By Order of the Commission

³ Ms. Harrison resigned from the CT169Strong organization on or about June 17, 2024 in the wake of this complaint.