

[Erik Raistakka](#)

replied

Mon, 19 May 2025 at 3:40 PM

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+1 more

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External Email

Thanks Phil and the PDC team for your help on this and extension of the deadline. Note, Ashley was also helpful today in supporting ensuring our new bank account and additional contribution received was added today in the PDC filings which would also make this complaint moot regardless. I have also included Kelly Wright and Krist Novoselic on this email who have been in contact with the PDC related to this matter.

Below is the official response to complaint 3 on behalf of the board of the Cascade Party WA:

I. INTRODUCTION

The Cascade Party of Washington asserts that it is a "bona fide political party" as defined under Washington Revised Code (RCW) 42.17A.005(6) and is not a "political committee" under RCW 42.17A.005(12). As such, the Cascade Party is not subject to the requirements imposed on political committees and is entitled to specific exemptions, including those related to fundraising, expenditure rules, and sponsor identification under RCW 42.17A.320.

II. STATEMENT OF FACTS

The Cascade Party of Washington has been recognized as a minor political party by the Washington Secretary of State, satisfying the criteria for a "bona fide political party" under RCW 42.17A.005(6). The party has complied with the statutory requirements for minor political parties, including holding advertised conventions and securing signatures from at least 1,000 registered voters on a petition bearing the party's name, as required during a presidential election year. These processes distinguish the Cascade Party from entities

classified as political committees, which can be formed by anyone at any time through simple filing.

III. LEGAL ARGUMENT

A. The Cascade Party Meets the Definition of a "Bona Fide Political Party" Under RCW 42.17A.005(6)

RCW 42.17A.005(6) defines a "bona fide political party" as:

"(a) An organization that has been recognized as a minor political party by the secretary of state."

The Cascade Party satisfies this definition, having been officially recognized as a minor political party by the Washington Secretary of State. The statute imposes specific and rigorous requirements for such recognition, including the organization of advertised conventions and the collection of at least 1,000 registered voter signatures during a presidential election year. These requirements establish a clear distinction between a bona fide political party and other entities, such as political committees.

B. The Cascade Party Is Not a "Political Committee" Under RCW 42.17A.005(12)

RCW 42.17A.005(12) defines a "committee" as including:

"a political committee such as a candidate, ballot proposition, recall, political, or continuing political committee."

The examples listed in the statute—candidate, ballot proposition, recall, political, or continuing committees—share the common characteristic of being entities that can be formed by any individual or group at any time through simple filing. In contrast, a bona fide political party, such as the Cascade Party, is subject to stringent statutory requirements that limit its formation to specific processes and timelines. The distinct definitions provided in RCW 42.17A.005(6) and (12) demonstrate that the legislature intended to treat bona fide political parties and political committees as separate entities with different obligations and privileges.

C. Exemptions for Bona Fide Political Parties

- Exempt Accounts for Fundraising and Expenditures

Unlike political committees, which are prohibited from maintaining exempt accounts, bona fide political parties are expressly permitted to raise and spend money under "exempt" rules. This distinction further underscores the unique status of bona fide political parties under Washington law and supports the Cascade Party's position that it is not subject to the restrictions imposed on political committees.

- Exemption from Sponsor Identification Requirements Under RCW 42.17A.320

RCW 42.17A.320 provides exemptions from sponsor identification requirements for certain entities, stating that a bona fide political party is distinct from any other "person or entity." The statute specifically grants an exemption to bona fide political parties, relieving them of the identification obligations imposed on other entities, including political committees. As a recognized minor political party, the Cascade Party is entitled to this exemption.

IV. CONCLUSION

The Cascade Party of Washington is a "bona fide political party" as defined by RCW 42.17A.005(6) and is not a "political committee" under RCW 42.17A.005(12). The clear statutory distinctions between these entities, combined with the Cascade Party's compliance with the requirements for minor political party recognition, establish that it is not subject to the requirements imposed on political committees. Furthermore, as a bona fide political party, the Cascade Party is entitled to specific exemptions, including the ability to maintain exempt accounts and relief from sponsor identification requirements under RCW 42.17A.320.

Cascade Party of Washington
Erik Raistakka, Treasurer