

Respondent Names

Niko Battle

Complainant Name

Jacob Read

Complaint Description**Jacob Read**

reported via the portal
(Sat, 16 Aug 2025 at 3:41 PM)

To the Public Disclosure Commission,

I am writing to you today to inform the Commission of severe and repeated campaign finance violations committed by the Friends of Niko Battle (FoNB) campaign. I formerly served as the ministerial treasurer for FoNB until my formal resignation letter/notice of contract termination and a final copy of the campaign books of account was delivered to the campaign's email on 8/5. Over the course of my tenure at FoNB, it became increasingly clear that Niko's requests for campaign finance records alterations were not well-meaning misunderstandings, but a malicious attempt to undermine the regulations set out in the RCW and WAC. I apologize for the length of this complaint but there are several contextual elements that make the severity and maliciousness of these violations supremely clear, and there are a large number of violations that I can recall (and likely a few I have forgotten and failed to catalogue here).

I had intended to come forward earlier, but was under the false impression that my contract barred me from sharing campaign information such as I am sharing below. Additionally, I had been warned by professional associates in Everett that Niko could present a major threat to my career prospects were he to dislike my services. Ultimately, I felt compelled to resign, and now feel compelled to report these violations to the PDC, because I have learned that Niko Battle willfully and knowingly violated PDC regulations and has even lied to someone who requested to see FoNB's books of account, in an effort to delay the requestor's lawful access to campaign books of account.

As I am no longer providing professional services to FoNB and can no longer reply to any complaints lodged against FoNB as an officer, I hope this letter will serve as my personal account/timeline for any other complaints made against FoNB. I have attempted to list violations in chronological order. I have additionally included what I believe to be instances of felonious conduct, in the hope that the PDC will inform the proper authorities so that a full and proper investigation can take place, and so that my account is entered into the public record. The people of Everett deserve to know what Niko Battle has done and is continuing to do.

Confirmed PDC Violation #1: Failing to report campaign debts and falsifying campaign records

Areas of Law: RCW 42.17A.240; WAC 390-16-042

On 6/10, at roughly 9:45 PM, I submitted C4 #110291441, which declared my estimated conditional win bonus of around \$750 dollars. While this is below the \$1,000 required to report, conditional bonuses enumerated in contracts are easy to forget about, and I was confident that my following invoice would place us above the required reporting amount.

Immediately following the report being filed, I received a call from Niko Battle at 9:52 PM. Niko said in no uncertain terms that my filing a conditional bonus as a debt was nothing any campaign he had ever worked on had done, which is highly concerning considering the number of campaigns that Niko has worked on in Washington State.

Niko requested that I amend the report to remove the debt. As a ministerial treasurer, I adhered to Niko's request after clarifying that we are absolutely required to report debts, even if they are conditional. The amended report is C-4 #110291452. Niko's issue with my reporting of the debt was not that it fell short of the reportable minimum and did not need to be reported, but that a conditional debt was reported at all. Niko later said that they had not wanted debts recorded because it made his campaign's financial status look worse and he had a big fundraiser coming up. In essence, Niko had requested that I falsify our campaign finance records in order to provide donors with a false understanding of the campaign's finances. Because of this, our reports fail to report the debt that the campaign owes to me, which is over \$1,000 dollars and has been due for a sufficient period so as to require its reporting on C-4's. This is the only debt that I can confirm has gone unreported, however other campaign staff/consultants on the campaign may be owed conditional bonuses that I was not made aware of.

Similarly, when I filed direct expenses that the campaign made on behalf of consultants, Niko called immediately after C-4 #110292514 was filed at around 2:15 PM, demanding that we show consultants (Collected US, LLC) as being the providing vendor for lodgings, food, and travel. Niko clearly stated that he believed this would obfuscate these expenditures, making it appear as a lump sum expenditure to the consultant (though this is, of course, not how providing vendor expenses manifest on C-4 reports). Again, Niko justified these actions by saying that every campaign they had worked for in Washington State had filed expenditures in this way. I explained to Niko that this was an improper way to file direct campaign expenses, but Niko insisted that the amendment be made, and as a ministerial treasurer I acquiesced, and filed C-4 #110292568.

Confirmed PDC Violation #2: Failing to provide full, accurate, and timely C-4 reports

Areas of Law: 42.17A.235 & .240

Following the incident outlined in Violation #1, I was told that to file any reports I would be required to call Niko beforehand to ensure reports were being filed exactly as they specified. I warned Niko in advance that as a candidate with a primary, we would have a single day to

report our pre-primary C-4's, but that it was reasonable to achieve this request without delaying our reports, so long as he scheduled time with me in advance. Niko did not schedule a time with me in advance for either primary window despite agreeing to its necessity and despite me reaching out in advance to do so; it took until 9:45 PM on 7/15 until I was able to call with Niko and discuss the campaign's financial activity.

Because I was expressly told to not begin working on our C-4 prior to this call and because the campaign had accrued a high number of transactions during this reporting period, it was impossible for me to provide a full, accurate, and timely C-4 report. As a campaign executive with obligations to ensure PDC compliance, Niko established an environment where providing such C-4 reports was effectively impossible. I ultimately filed an unfinished report at around 11:50 PM, in an attempt to at least furnish some data to the public. To at least capture the total amount of spending in each category, I had to condense similar charges from different vendors as I was not provided with the time necessary to enter dozens of unique restaurant and coffee shop vendors. After filing C-4 #110299907, it was my intent to call Niko to answer my remaining questions and then file an amended report as soon as possible.

However, the following day I was sent a news report published in My Everett News entitled [*A Bit of Controversy in the City Council District 4 Elections*](#). The article alleged that Niko had not lived in the district for long enough to be eligible to hold the office. The article made me realize that Niko's statements to myself and the public were showing serious inconsistencies. I became uncertain as to whether I could continue to have a professional relationship with FoNB and Niko Battle, and whether I could certify FoNB's reports in good faith and began considering the options legally available to me in light of the contract I had signed with FoNB, and the potential ramifications therein.. The article alleged that Niko had not lived in the district for long enough to be eligible to hold the office. The article made me realize that Niko's statements to myself and the public were showing serious inconsistencies. I became uncertain as to whether I could continue to have a professional relationship with FoNB and Niko Battle, and whether I could certify FoNB's reports in good faith and began considering the options legally available to me in light of the contract I had signed with FoNB, and the potential ramifications therein.

On 7/30, Niko failed to respond to my efforts to contact him in any way. As a result, our C-4 for 7/30 is almost entirely based on my best guesses for what a charge might be and is likely riddled with inaccuracies.

Knowing now that Niko did not plan on telling me about his eligibility concerns, or about other articles that had appeared in the press, I realized that Niko had lied to me multiple times, was likely using the Think Tank coworking space as a campaign address due to not having a personal address in the district, and was almost certainly ineligible for the seat. My faith and trust in Niko was very much shaken and I found myself unable to certify any further reports for FoNB in good faith and began preparing for my resignation.

Confirmed PDC Violation #3: Failing to allow for campaign books of account inspection within 48 hours; purposefully delaying the books of account inspection process by lying to the requestor

Areas of Law: RCW 42.17A.235; WAC 390-16-043

I can confirm that, according to information published within the Lynnwood Times and my own account of events/interactions with Niko, FoNB has failed to make their books of account available within 48 hours. Further, Niko Battle lied to the individual who requested access to the books of account and made no effort at all to make them available.

According to the article [Everett City Council Candidate Niko Battle: Show Your Campaign Records!](#) by Mario Lotmore at the Lynnwood Times, Mario Lotmore requested access to the FoNB campaign's books of account on 7/31 at 9:49 PM. Despite needing to permit access to campaign books of account within 48 hours of the request, Niko didn't acknowledge the request until 8/2 at 9:06 PM, despite receiving a text message from them as well. Despite Mario Lotmore's reply to meet at "10 A.M., Monday, August 4, 2025", which is fully within their right to request and would have been entirely reasonable had Niko responded promptly to the request and informed me, he did neither. Niko claims in a response at 8:00 AM on 8/4 that "My treasurer does not work on the weekend" and "I'll need to call my treasurer during business hours".

Both of Niko's claims listed in the Lynnwood Times article are demonstrably false, and Niko had to have known these statements were false when he made them. I work weekends regularly and have worked on weekends for FoNB in the past to prepare reports in advance, respond to correspondence/questions from Niko, and assist with opening the bank account and fund-raising service accounts, as most treasurers/compliance staff must. Similarly, while I have told him not to call me past 9 PM (until August Niko ignored this request, regularly calling me after 9PM for issues far less important than a request to view our books of account), that request did not preclude email or text. In order to fulfill our obligations regarding a books inspection, Niko should have informed me immediately. Instead, Niko waited to call me until August 4th at 1:59 PM, five days after the request, to try and set up a time in the next two days for me to drive up from my residence in Corvallis, OR and display our books of account.

My presence at a books inspection is clearly unnecessary. Our books of account are entirely digital and have always been, and Niko has a better understanding of these books as the only campaign official making charges and seeing all the receipts of said charges. Had I been alerted to the request, I could have prepared the books of account for delivery via email or a hosting service within thirty minutes. Even had we presented our books of account in a timely manner, our books were incredibly meagre as Niko failed to retain receipts, images, and documents to verify our campaign finance data despite repeated requests from myself.

Potential PDC Violation #1: Improper use of campaign funds

Areas of Law: RCW 42.17A.425 & .445; WAC 390-16-238

FoNB authorized dozens of food and gas expenses that are very hard to explain considering the scale and scope of the campaign. Despite raising only ~\$10,000, the campaign was regularly authorizing charges at 2-3 restaurants and 2-3 coffee shops on any given day in July. Beyond this, there are a large number of charges at gas stations that Niko said were for gas cards for volunteers. A total lack of receipts-keeping also means that I cannot independently verify the nature of the food and gas expenses.

I believe there is sufficient suspicious data to merit an investigation into the legitimacy of these expenses, to confirm whether or not the food, coffee, and gas cards were really ending up in the hands of staff and volunteers, or if these were improper uses of campaign funds for personal expenditures.

Potential PDC Violation #2: Creating false in-kind contributions to alter public-facing data

Areas of Law: WAC 390-16-207

In relation to PDC Violation #1, wherein Niko requested I obfuscate or otherwise misrepresent campaign finance data to alter donor perceptions of the campaign, Niko told me to file a false in-kind contribution to make it seem as though the campaign had raised more money than it had. The \$1,000 in-kind contribution from Gordon Marketing and Management to FoNB is entirely fabricated, the services rendered were non-existent, and Niko clarified that he was comfortable doing this as Gordon Marketing and Management is owned by one of his parents. I was unsure if this constituted a violation at the time, and am still unsure, but I wanted to declare here that the in-kind in question was wholly fabricated, with the express intent of deceiving donors.

Potential Criminal Violation #1: Niko Battle attempted to impersonate his father to access a bank account held in his father's name; furthermore, Niko may have impersonated their father to establish said bank account

Areas of Law: RCW 9A.60.040; 18 U.S. Code § 1344

At the start of the campaign, as FoNB needed to establish a bank account in order to begin fundraising, Niko realized he had lost his wallet and photo ID, which would prevent us from opening such an account. Ultimately, Niko requested I add his father, Kevin Battle, to the campaign's C-1 so that he could establish a bank account for the campaign, allowing us to fundraise earlier than if we had waited for a replacement ID. However, this resulted in an issue where the name on the account was listed as Kevin Battle, and only Kevin Battle could make executive decisions regarding the account. This prevented us from establishing a fundraising account with any of the various digital fundraising platforms. Rather than simply having Kevin Battle travel to a BECU and fix the error, Niko spent roughly a week attempting to brute force access to the account in other ways that did not require his father's presence (the only owner legally listed on the account). Niko refused to elaborate why this was not possible, but I did not press further.

This culminated in Niko requesting that I join him on a conference call on 5/16 with a BECU rep to help Niko navigate the process. I agreed, and we called a BECU branch in Everett (I

am unsure if it is the same branch our campaign accounts are currently located at), at 1:46 PM. Despite repeated and clear refusals by BECU branch staff to allow Niko to access the account without providing a social security number, or presenting a physical ID over webcam banking, Niko continued to argue with staff until we were directed to the branch manager (I believe her name was Erika), who again refused to allow access without proper identification. I had first thought Niko's refusal to share his SSN was due to mere pettiness, as he reiterated throughout the call that as someone who was there when the account was made, he should not have been required to give his SSN. After terminating the call with BECU, Niko clarified that he had been lying to them (and myself) and that he couldn't give them his SSN because he was impersonating his father. I was not made aware of this fact until the end of the call.

Knowing the cost of the delay to FoNB's fundraising and the ease with which Kevin could have travelled to a BECU as opposed to other methods employed by Niko, it calls into question whether Niko's father truly opened the bank account in the first place. If my fears about this are true, Niko may have fraudulently established the campaign bank account in Kevin Battle's name using documents he may have taken from Kevin Battle's home, without his knowledge. If this is true, Niko may have committed bank fraud as set out in 18 U.S. Code § 1344. I also fear that by impersonating his father to try and access an account that is legally in his name, Niko may have been committing criminal impersonation as set out in RCW 9A.60.040. Sadly I have no written record to substantiate a clear answer either way, but Niko has lied to the press and public in writing before, as elaborated in Confirmed PDC Violation #3 and various articles released by the Lynnwood Times about Niko; and so I remain highly concerned about this issue, especially as I was made party to it without my knowledge or consent.

Sincerely,
Jacob Read
Jacob.A.Read@outlook.com | 480-415-6818

What impact does the alleged violation(s) have on the public?

List of attached evidence or contact information where evidence may be found

Please see attached "Friends of Niko Battle Complaint.pdf" for a better formatted version of the complaint description.

List of potential witnesses with contact information to reach them

Certification (Complainant)

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that information provided with this complaint is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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Confirmed PDC Violation #2: Failing to provide full, accurate, and timely C-4 reports

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Confirmed PDC Violation #3: Failing to allow for campaign books of account inspection within 48 hours; purposefully delaying the books of account inspection process by lying to the requestor

Areas of Law: RCW 42.17A.235; WAC 390-16-043

I can confirm that, according to information published within the Lynnwood Times and my own account of events/interactions with Niko, FoNB has failed to make their books of account available within 48 hours. Further, Niko Battle lied to the individual who requested access to the books of account and made no effort at all to make them available.

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Sincerely,

Jacob Read

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