



State of Washington
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

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NOTE: On Jan. 1, 2026, Chapter 42.17A was recodified to Title 29B RCW

May 6, 2026

Delivered electronically to Tarra Simmons at tarra@electtarrasimmons.com

Subject: PDC Case 184074 regarding Tarra Simmons

Tarra Simmons:

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) completed its review of the complaint filed by Val Torrens on December 23, 2025. The complaint alleged violations of: RCW 29B.40.090 for improper disposal of surplus funds to a nonprofit called Better Minds Better Communities.

Background and Findings

- You are an elected Washington State House of Representatives member for the 23rd District. The Tarra Simmons Surplus Funds Committee (the Committee) was registered on January 6, 2021, under the Full Reporting option. You are the Chair and Abbot Taylor is the Ministerial Treasurer for the Committee.
- You were offered a Statement of Understanding which you accepted and paid a civil penalty. In the agreement you acknowledged a first violation of RCW 29B.40.090 by improperly disposing of surplus funds when, in 2025, you made two \$15,000 donations from surplus funds to the Better Minds Better Communities nonprofit. The nonprofit is registered as a Foreign Nonprofit Corporation with the Washington Secretary of State but was not, at the time the donations were made, registered as a charitable organization, in accordance with RCW 19.09, as is required by RCW 29B.40.090 for a non-profit recipient of surplus funds.
- Based on PDC staff's investigation, you did not benefit from the donations to Better Minds Better Communities. The funds appear to have been used by the nonprofit for the purpose of planning for and developing curriculum for a program called Free to Lead.
- During the investigation, you requested that your Ministerial Treasurer, Abbot Taylor, audit the surplus funds account for donations made to other nonprofits. It was discovered that donations were made to NW Hopeful Horizons, in 2024 and 2025, and Looks2Justice, in 2024, and the entities were not at the time charitable organizations registered in

accordance with RCW 19.09. Prompted by your outreach to the organizations, they are now or are in the process of becoming charitable organizations as is required by RCW 29B.40.090.

- You were very cooperative throughout the investigation and do not have prior warnings or violations of PDC requirements.

Summary and Resolution

You completed a Statement of Understanding (SOU) and paid a \$300 civil penalty in accordance with WAC 390-37-143 (Brief Enforcement Penalty Schedule), acknowledging violations listed in the SOU. The \$300 penalty assessed resolves the allegations outlined in the SOU.

Pursuant to WAC 390-37-060(1)(d), you are receiving a formal written warning concerning earlier instances of improper disposal of surplus funds when you made donations to nonprofits that were not also registered charitable organizations. You did not have the benefit of PDC guidance in earlier instances; moving forward, Staff expect that you will conduct more extensive due diligence when donating surplus funds to nonprofit entities ensuring they are registered charitable organizations in accordance with RCW 19.09. The Commission will consider this formal written warning in deciding on further Commission action if there are future violations of PDC laws or rules.

After consideration of all the circumstances, further proceedings would not serve the purposes of the Fair Campaign Practices Act. Under WAC 390-37-070, the executive director, at any time prior to consideration by the Commission, may dismiss a complaint which on its face, or as shown by investigation, provides reason to believe that a violation has occurred, but also shows that the respondent is in substantial compliance with the relevant statutes or rules, or shows that formal enforcement action is not warranted.

Based on this information, the PDC has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 29B.60.020(1).

If you have questions, contact Tanya Mercier, Compliance Officer by e-mail at pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/ Electronically signed

Tanya Mercier
Compliance Officer

Endorsed by,

/s/ Electronically signed

Peter Frey Lavalley
Executive Director

cc: Val Torrens