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8 **BEFORE THE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON**

9 In Re: The Matter of Enforcement Action
10 Against:

PDC CASE NO. 192726

FINAL ORDER

11 MELISSA STERNS,
12 Respondent.
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15 This matter was heard by the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission
16 (Commission) on July 23, 2026, by in-person, telephonic, and online streaming access. The
17 hearing was held in accordance with Chapter 34.05 RCW, Title 29B RCW, and Chapter 390-37
18 WAC.

19 Commissioners present in-person were J. Robert Leach, Commission Chair (presiding);
20 Douglass North, Commission Vice-Chair, and Commissioner Matthew Segal. Commissioner
21 Teebah Alsaleh was present online. Also present were Assistant Attorneys General John S.
22 Meader and Amanda Migchelbrink representing the Commission, Assistant Attorney General
23 Susie Giles-Klein, representing PDC Staff, and Carolyn Jones, PDC Compliance Coordinator.
24 Notice was provided to the Respondent and she did not appear on her own behalf. The
25 proceedings were open to the public and recorded.
26

1 The Commissioners had before them the following materials:

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- 3 • Memorandum, dated July 13, 2026, prepared by Carolyn Jones, PDC Compliance
- 4 Coordinator;
- 5 • Enforcement Hearing Notice, PDC Case Number 192726, dated July 1, 2026, for a July
- 6 23, 2026, enforcement hearing before the full Commission;
- 7 • Order Imposing Fine, PDC Case Number 156922, dated September 20, 2024.
- 8

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10 I. FINDINGS OF FACT

11 This matter involves allegations the Respondent violated RCW 29B.55.010 by failing to

12 file the required Personal Financial Affairs Statement (F-1 Report) for calendar years 2024 and

13 2025, due no later than April 15, 2025, and April 15, 2026, respectively.

- 14 1. The Respondent is a City Council Member for City of Shelton in 2024 and
- 15 2025.
- 16
- 17 2. Between February 20, 2026, and April 20, 2026, PDC staff sent email reminders
- 18 to all officials regarding their missing F-1 reports for calendar year 2025.
- 19
- 20 3 Between March 17, 2025, and May 5, 2025, PDC staff sent email reminders to
- 21 all officials regarding their missing F-1 reports for calendar year 2024.
- 22
- 23 4. On July 1, 2026, PDC staff emailed and mailed the Respondent a hearing notice
- 24 regarding the missing reports for calendar years 2024 and 2025. The notice was
- 25 sent to the Respondent's email and mailing address of record.
- 26

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2 5. As of the date of the July 23, 2026, hearing before the Commission, the
3 Respondent had not filed the F-1 reports covering election years 2024 and 2025.
4

5 6. Respondent has one prior enforcement violation:
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7 a. PDC Case 156922. Respondent, an elected City Council
8 Member for the City of Shelton, failed to file her F-1 report for calendar
9 year 2023, which was due no later than April 15, 2024. At an August
10 29, 2024, Adjudicative Proceeding (Brief Enforcement Hearing),
11 Respondent was found in violation of RCW 42.17A.700 and assessed a
12 \$250 civil penalty. To date, Respondent has not paid the outstanding
13 \$250 civil penalty, and the missing F-1 report for calendar year 2023 has
14 not been filed.
15

16 II. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

17 1. The Commission has jurisdiction over this proceeding pursuant to Title 29B
18 RCW, the State campaign finance and disclosure law; Chapter 34.05 RCW, the
19 Administrative Procedure Act; and Title 390 WAC.
20

21 2. Pursuant to RCW 29B.55.010 elected officials must file a Financial Affairs
22 Statement (F-1 Report) for calendar years 2024 and 2025, no later than April
23 15, 2025, and April 15, 2026, respectively.
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2 **III. ORDER**

3 This Order will be the Final Order. After consideration of the mitigating and
4 aggravating factors, the Findings of Fact, and the Conclusions of Law, the Respondent is
5 assessed a civil penalty for failure to timely file the F-1 reports of \$3,000 per violation for a
6 total of \$6,000. Each violation shall have \$1,500 suspended, subject to the following
7 conditions:

- 8
- 9 1. a. The non-suspended portion (\$1,500) of the \$3,000 civil penalty
10 for failure to file the F-1 report for calendar year 2024 in violation of
11 RCW 29B.55.010 is paid by the Respondent within 30 days of the date
12 of this Final Order.
- 13
- 14 b. The non-suspended portion (\$1,500) of the \$3,000 civil penalty
15 for failure to file the F-1 report for calendar year 2025 in violation of
16 RCW 29B.55.010 is paid by the Respondent within 30 days of the date
17 of this Final Order.
- 18
- 19 c. The Respondent files the missing F-1 reports for calendar years
20 2023, 2024, and 2025 and pays the delinquent civil penalties of \$250
21 (2023), including any collection fees or costs, within 30 days of the date
22 of this final order.
- 23
- 24 d. The Respondent remains in full compliance with all PDC
25 reporting requirements and is not found to have committed any further
26 violations of Title 29B RCW or Title 390 WAC within four years of the

1 date of this Final Order. The suspended penalty shall not be assessed
2 based solely upon any remediable violation, minor violation, or error
3 classified by the Commission as appropriate to address by a technical
4 correction.
5

- 6 2. If the Respondent fails to meet the conditions in Section III(1) of this order within
7 30 days of the date of this order, the suspended portion of the penalty for calendar
8 years 2024 and 2025 shall immediately become due and the matter may be sent
9 to collection or brought to Superior Court as allowed by law without further
10 action by the Commission.
11

12 SO ORDERED this _____ day of August, 2026.

13 WASHINGTON STATE PUBLIC
14 DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

15 FOR THE COMMISSION:

16 J. Robert Leach

J. Robert Leach (Aug 6, 2026 10:32:33 PDT)

17 J. Robert Leach,
18 Chair, Public Disclosure Commission

19 *This order sent by email to:*

20 Melissa Sterns, Respondent
21 mstearnshomes@gmail.com

22 Carolyn Jones,
23 PDC Compliance Coordinator,
24 pdc@pdc.wa.gov
25
26

Carolyn Jones

I, _____, certify that I emailed a
copy of this order to the Respondent at his respective
email address.

Carolyn Jones

Carolyn Jones (Aug 6, 2026 11:11:32 PDT)

Signed

Aug 6, 2026

Date

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2 **NOTICE: RECONSIDERATION**

3 Pursuant to the provisions of RCW 34.05.470 and WAC 390-37-150, you may file a Petition for
4 Reconsideration with the PDC within ten (10) days from the date this Final Order is served upon
5 you. Any Request for reconsideration must state the specific grounds for the relief requested.
6 Petitions must be delivered or mailed to the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission,
7 711 Capitol Way, Room 206, Box 40908, Olympia WA 98504-0908.

8 **NOTICE: PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW**

9 You have the right to appeal this Final Order to Superior Court, pursuant to the Petition for
10 Judicial Review provisions of RCW 34.05.542. Any Petition for Judicial Review of this Final
11 Order must be filed with the court and also served upon both the Commission and the Office of
12 the Attorney general within thirty (30) days after the date this Final Order is served upon you.
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