

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
CAMPAIGN FINANCE AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE BOARD**

**FINDINGS REGARDING
JIM RAMSTAD VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE**

Procedural Background

In response to an inquiry from the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board (“the Board”), John Cooney, campaign manager, Jim Ramstad Volunteer Committee, notified the Board that the Jim Ramstad Volunteer Committee, an unregistered association, made a \$5,000 contribution to the 3rd Congressional District RPM, a registered political party unit, without providing the required disclosure.

Minn. Stat. §10A.27, subd. 13 (b), prohibits an unregistered association from making a contribution to a registered political party unit, unless, at the time the contribution is made, the unregistered association provides a disclosure statement that meets the reporting requirements of Minn. Stat. §10A.20.

On April 21, 2005, Mr. Cooney stated, “I believed the contribution would be deposited in a federal account and apologize for the misunderstanding.”

Mr. Cooney indicated that the Jim Ramstad Volunteer Committee received a refund from the 3rd Congressional District RPM and provided the Board with a copy of the check returning the contribution.

This matter was considered by the Board in executive session at its meeting on June 7, 2005. The Board’s decision was based on correspondence received from Mr. Cooney and Board records.

Based on the record before it, the Board issues the following:

EVIDENTIARY FINDINGS

1. There is evidence that the Jim Ramstad Volunteer Committee inadvertently violated Minn. Stat. §10A.27, subd. 13 (b), when it made a contribution in excess of \$100 to a registered political party unit, the 3rd Congressional District RPM, without providing the required disclosure.
2. There is evidence that the \$5,000 contribution was returned to the Jim Ramstad Volunteer Committee. However, there is no evidence that the contribution was returned within 60 days.
3. Minn. Stat. §10A.27, subd. 13 (b), provides that an unregistered association that makes a contribution in excess of \$100 without the required disclosure is subject to civil penalty of up to \$1,000.

Based on the above Statement of the Evidence, the Board makes the following:

FINDINGS CONCERNING PROBABLE CAUSE

There is probable cause to believe that the Jim Ramstad Volunteer Committee inadvertently violated Minn. Stat. §10A.27, subd. 13 (b) by making a contribution in excess of \$100 to a registered political party unit without providing the required disclosure. The Board has been provided with a copy of the check returning \$5,000 to the Jim Ramstad Volunteer Committee, however, the contribution was not returned within 60 days

Based on the above Findings, the Board issues the following:

ORDER

1. The Board imposes a civil penalty of \$1,000 on the Jim Ramstad Volunteer Committee for making a contribution in excess of \$100 without providing the required disclosure.
2. The Jim Ramstad Volunteer Committee is directed to forward to the Board payment of the civil penalty of \$1,000 by check or money order payable to the State of Minnesota, within thirty days of the public posting of this order.
3. If the Jim Ramstad Volunteer Committee does not comply with the provisions of this order, the Board's Executive Director shall refer this matter to the appropriate County Attorney for civil enforcement pursuant to Minn. Stat. §10A.28, subd.4.
4. The Board investigation of this matter is hereby made a part of the public records of the Board pursuant to Minn. Stat. §10A.02, subd. 11, and upon payment of the civil penalty imposed herein, this matter is concluded.

Dated: June 7, 2005



Terri Ashmore, Chair
Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board