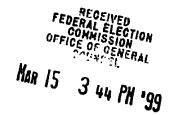


Office of the Secretary of State State of Minnesota

100 Constitution Ave., 180 State Office Bldg. St. Paul, MN 55155-1299



Public Information: (651)296-2803 Election Division: (651)215-1440

March 12, 1999

Lawrence M. Noble General Counsel Federal Election Commission 999 E. Street NW Washington, D.C. 20463

AOR 1999-07

Dear Mr. Noble:

I am writing to request an advisory opinion on the following issue:

May a government office that is authorized to sponsor nonpartisan activities to promote voter participation be permitted to provide free hyperlinks between its WEB page and the WEB page of any candidate who provides the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) to that page without violating the provisions of the federal campaign contribution laws?

The Office of the Secretary of State for the State of Minnesota is authorized to sponsor or participate in nonpartisan activities that promote voter participation. See Minnesota Statutes, section 204B.27, subdivision 6. This subdivision specifically states:

The secretary of state may sponsor or participate in nonpartisan activities to promote voter participation in Minnesota elections and in efforts to increase voter registration and voter turnout. March 12, 1999 Page 2

One of the activities the Office has chosen to sponsor is a WEB site that contains information about all candidate filings for federal, state and county level offices. For an example, please see www.sos.state.mn.us/elections/statewide.html. With the increasing use of the Internet and WEB sites, we anticipate that we will be requested to provide hyperlinks between the WEB page maintained by the Office and candidate WEB pages.

We are willing to provide free hyperlinks for all candidate WEB addresses about which we are informed. We are also considering a disclaimer on our WEB site that would inform users that (1) hyperlinks to candidate sites are done based on addresses (URLs) provided by the candidate; (2) the hyperlinks are displayed for voter information purposes and not to influence the nomination or election of a candidate; and (3) candidate WEB sites are not monitored or regulated by this Office.

Our concern is that a hyperlink between a WEB page owned and maintained by this Office and a candidate's WEB site will be construed as a violation of federal campaign contribution provisions. See, e.g. 2 Record 1-2 (December 1998)(summarizing MUR 4340/4685).

We would appreciate receiving an advisory opinion on this issue. Questions or requests for additional information may be directed to Jeff Sigurdson, Election Advisor, at (651) 215-1439.

Sincerely,

Mary Kiffmeyer

Secretary of State

Mary Kiffmeyer.

c: Jeff Sigurdson

Constitutional Offices



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- State Treasurer
- Attorney General

Governor and Lt. Governor

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Secretary of State

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MINNESOTA SECRETARY OF STATE ELECTION CANDIDATE INFORMATION FORM (Voluntary Disclosure)

Please type or print clearly.

fou are invited to complete this form and leave it with the filing officer for public information. Information submitted by state and federal candidates will be scanned and placed on the Secretary of State's web site: www.sos.state.mn.us.
Van Parlal
Yourname: 101 Terttet Age: 37
Your address: 10. Box 3872 MINIS, MM 55405-0872
Telephone number: 6/3-38/-0/2 2
Preferred mailing address (if different):
Occupation and employer: Unemployed
Office sought: <u>Fovernot</u>
Political party or principle: 6 reen Party of Mn
Current office held: First year elected or appointed:
Previous elected or appointed public offices: NONE
Previous elected or appointed public offices:
^
Endorsements: Green Party of Mn
J
Comments or filing statement (use this space only): We need to invest
Comments or ming statement (use this space only):
it does not undermine out water,
air, soil, and hab: tats. This in vest
ment must embrace Full human digniti
in out Communities.
L P-+0 ablad
Candidate Signature Date

If you have any questions, please contact the Election Division at (612)215-1440.

Please submit this information:

Mail 180 State Office Bidg., 100 Constitution Ave., St. Paul, MN 55155-1299

Fax (612)296-9073.

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