

Massachusetts Office of Campaign and Political Finance

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Coakley Committee resolves campaign finance issues concerning federal committee expenditures

The state campaign committee of Attorney General Martha Coakley will disgorge \$17,813 to charity as part of a disposition agreement with OCPF concerning expenditures made with federal committee funds. The state committee also paid \$6,000 to the state for the cost of OCPF's review.

OCPF concluded that Coakley's state campaign committee was not in compliance with the campaign finance law when her U.S. Senate committee paid for campaign services that should have been paid by the state committee. Under Massachusetts law, federal committees are prohibited from providing anything of value to state committees.

The issues in the agreement address expenditures made to a vendor for database services, as well as expenditures related to attending the 2012 Democratic National Convention.

According to OCPF's review, Coakley's federal committee began making payments in 2009 to NGP VAN, a vendor that offers technology services to political campaigns for fundraising, compliance, field-organizing and social media. In 2009, the monthly bill was \$850 – the federal committee paid \$750 and the state committee paid \$100 a month as a secondary account.

In 2010, after the U.S. Senate election was over, Coakley announced she would run for re-election as attorney general. Although Coakley had now become a candidate for state office and NGP VAN's services primarily supported her campaign for state office, the NGP VAN billing remained the same until September of 2013.

Based on a review of documents provided by NGP VAN, campaign finance reports filed by the committees and interviews conducted by OCPF, the agency determined that the federal committee's payments to NGP VAN from 2010 to 2013 resulted in an approximate total of \$14,050 being paid by the federal committee that should have been paid by the state committee.

OCPF also determined that Coakley's federal committee paid \$3,763 for expenses associated with her attendance at the 2012 Democratic National Convention while she was attorney general and not an active candidate for federal office. According to the disposition agreement, OCPF determined that Coakley's state committee should have paid for the convention costs.

OCPF has further concluded that there was no reason to believe that the state committee violated the campaign finance law in relation to Anne Gentile's services as treasurer for the state committee.

The disposition agreement was signed by OCPF Director Michael J. Sullivan and the Coakley Committee's attorney, Andrew Upton. A copy of the agreement is [available here](#).

A disposition agreement is a voluntary written agreement entered into between the subject of a review and OCPF, in which the subject agrees to take certain specific actions.

OCPF is an independent state agency that administers the state's campaign finance law, which provides for disclosure and regulation of campaign finance activity by candidates and political committees.

<http://files.ocpf.us/pdf/actions/coakley2014.pdf>



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