

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of Campaign and Political Finance

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OCPF, Rep. St. Fleur sign disposition agreement concerning car payment

The Office of Campaign and Political Finance announced today that it has entered into a disposition agreement with state Rep. Marie St. Fleur of Dorchester regarding a payment made to her from her campaign account.

In the agreement, OCPF concluded that a \$5,000 payment toward the purchase of St. Fleur's personal vehicle by her committee was improper, due to issues of personal use.

The agreement stems from August 2001, when St. Fleur's committee paid her \$5,000 as what the candidate later told OCPF was an initial payment toward the committee's purchase of her personal vehicle, a 1995 Honda wagon, for \$13,000. The remaining \$8,000 was not paid and "the transaction was not completed," according to the agreement.

OCPF concluded that St. Fleur's receipt of \$5,000 from her Committee as a "down payment" for the planned future purchase of the vehicle violated M.G.L. c.55, §6, which prohibits the use of campaign funds for the Candidate's or any other person's personal use. Campaign funds may be used to reimburse a candidate for campaign, legislative or constituent travel using a personal automobile, but only if the expense is not otherwise paid, provided or reimbursed by the Commonwealth. St. Fleur received per diem payments of \$10 for each day that she traveled to the State House during 2001 and 2002, according to the agreement.

St. Fleur made a personal payment of \$750 to the Commonwealth in the nature of a civil forfeiture and will reimburse the \$5,000 to her committee from her personal funds. St. Fleur and the Committee also agreed to seek written guidance from OCPF before making any future automobile-related expenditures, to keep detailed records for all such expenditures, and to file an additional campaign finance report covering the first half of 2003 in July 2003.

OCPF agreed not to refer the matter to the Attorney General for further action.

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The agreement was signed by OCPF Director Michael J. Sullivan, St. Fleur and Verdell Hayes, the committee treasurer.

A copy of the agreement, as well as all reports filed by the St. Fleur Committee, are available at OCPF's office at One Ashburton Place, Room 411, Boston.

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