

Philadelphia Board of Ethics

Contact: J. Shane Creamer, Jr., Esq.: 215 686-9450

For Immediate Release: May 12, 2009

Ethics Board Enters Into Settlement Agreement with the Committee to Elect Seth Williams

PHILADELPHIA – The Philadelphia Board of Ethics announced today that it has entered into a Settlement Agreement with the Committee to Elect Seth Williams, the Committee’s treasurer, Vincent DeFino and District Attorney candidate Seth Williams (“the Williams Campaign”) that addresses reporting errors in the Committee’s and Mr. Williams’s 2008 cycle 7 annual campaign finance reports that were electronically filed with the Ethics Board.

As detailed in the Settlement Agreement, ten expenditures in Mr. Williams’s report were mistakenly reported twice and one was reported three times. Each of the duplicate entries was below \$100. The duplicate entries were caused by the Williams Campaign’s inadequate documentation of certain expenditures by Mr. Williams in 2008. However, the Campaign adopted better record keeping practices in late 2008.

In addition to the duplicate expenditures, the Williams Committee misreported expenditures to Sonita Williams (Mr. Williams’s wife) that were described with the word “reimbursement” in the Committee’s campaign report, but should have been reported as: “reimbursement to Seth and Sonita Williams for expenditures incurred by Seth Williams.

“We are please that the Williams Campaign cooperated fully with the Ethics Board’s investigation and has agreed to both address its reporting mistakes and to be accountable to the public for those errors,” said the Board’s Executive Director, J. Shane Creamer, Jr., Esquire. He added: “this serves as yet another reminder that candidates and political committees must maintain good bookkeeping practices at all times to ensure that the public disclosures in their campaign finance reports are both accurate and complete.”

The Williams Campaign has agreed to pay a total civil fine in the amount of \$3,750 for the reporting errors, including \$250 for each of the eleven duplicate entries and \$1,000 for the misreported expenditures to Sonita Williams. The

Williams Campaign has also agreed to file amended campaign finance reports to correct the reporting errors.

In exchange for the Williams Campaign's agreement to pay a civil fine of \$3,750 and to file amended campaign finance reports, the Ethics Board has agreed to waive any further penalties or fines relating to their 2008 cycle 7 reports.

The Philadelphia Board of Ethics is a five-member independent board established by ordinance, approved by Philadelphia voters in May 2006, and installed on November 27, 2006. It is charged with providing ethics training for all City employees and enforcing City campaign finance, financial disclosure and conflict of interest laws. The Ethics Board has authority to render advice, investigate complaints and issue fines.

###