

Memorandum

To: Robert Meyers,
Executive Director

From: Christina Seymour,
Auditor, Ethics Commission

Date: August 8, 2008

Re: K08-070 Commissioner Audrey Edmonson 2008 Campaign Contributions

GOVERNING AUTHORITY:

Florida Statute §106.08(1)(a), Contributions; Limitations on, states the following with regards to campaign contribution limits imposed on both individuals and business entities:

*“Except for political parties, **no person, political committee, or committee of continuous existence may, in any election, make contributions in excess of \$500 to any candidate for election to or retention in office or to any political committee supporting or opposing one or more candidates.**”*

Additionally, Miami Dade County Code §12-5, Campaign contributions and expenditures, “follows the provisions of the election laws of the State of Florida regarding campaign contributions and expenditures and these laws apply to elections for...the Office of Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners...” (Ord. No. 98-183, §§ 1, 2, 12-15-98; Ord. No. 05-214, § 2, 12-6-05)

BACKGROUND:

Commissioner Audrey Edmonson currently represents Miami-Dade County District 3 on the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners (BCC). In the current 2008 election cycle, Commissioner Edmonson is campaigning to retain her seat on the BCC. As of the March 31, 2008 Campaign Treasurers Report (CTR) filed with the Elections Department, all CTRs filed to date reveal a total of \$78,515 in campaign contributions have been received by Commissioner Edmonson.

The purpose of the COE auditor's review is to verify whether an individual or a business entity, owned by the same person(s), made campaign contributions in excess of \$500 to Commissioner Edmonson's 2008 election campaign. Contributions in excess of \$500 contributed by the same individual or entity would constitute a violation of Florida Statute §106.08(1)(a), Contributions; Limitations on, as well as Miami-Dade County Code §12-5, Campaign Contributions and Expenditures.

For further clarification, the COE auditor inquired of and was informed by the Florida Division of Elections that an individual can personally make campaign contributions up to \$500 and also may make campaign contributions not to exceed \$500 from the contributor's business, if the contributor owns his or her own place of business, and not be in violation of Florida Statute §106.08(1)(a). Each contribution is considered as coming from two separate contributors: 1) the individual contributor; and, 2) the business entity's corporate contribution to the election campaign, though owned by the same individual contributor, because the business entity is considered separately from the individual campaign contributor.

AUDITOR'S SUMMARY & CONCLUSION:

The COE auditor obtained all CTRs filed by Commissioner Edmonson with MDC Elections Department for the 2008 election cycle through March 31, 2008. Based on the information documented on the CTRs, the auditor scheduled each campaign contribution and noted the name of the contributor and the amount of each campaign contribution.

Based on the results of the COE auditor's data analysis, no campaign contributions were made by either the same individual contributor or business entity in excess of \$500. Therefore, all campaign contributions received by Commissioner Edmonson as of March 31, 2008 are in full compliance with both Florida Statute §106.08(1)(a) and Miami-Dade County Code §12-5.

Attachment