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Homestead campaign ad under scrutiny

A hearing examiner, overseeing an expedited process, today found Probable Cause that a campaign flyer distributed by Homestead mayoral candidate Jeff Porter against competitor Mark Bell violates Miami-Dade County's Mandatory Fair Campaign Practices Ordinance. The expedited hearing process governs all complaints that are filed within 50 days of an election.

Senior Judge Steven D. Robinson ruled there is justification to proceed to a hearing before the Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust after reviewing the material and listening to presentations from the Public Advocate and from an attorney representing Mr. Bell. The complaint (**C 13-31**) concerned a flyer claiming that Mark and Lynda Bell "gamed the system," and received a "\$25,000 gift courtesy of the taxpayers of Homestead," regarding a grant issued by the Homestead Community Redevelopment Agency for renovations to the historic Redland Hotel, owned by Mr. Bell.

The Ethics Commission was created in 1996 as an independent agency with advisory and quasi-judicial powers. It is composed of five members, serving staggered terms of four years each. Through a program of education, outreach and enforcement, the Commission seeks to empower the community and bolster public trust.

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