



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
JOCELYN BENSON, SECRETARY OF STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
LANSING

June 15, 2023

James Ernest  
9084 Costner Dr. SE  
Caledonia, MI 49316

Re: *Ernest v. Hardy*  
Campaign Finance Complaint No. 23-031

Dear Mr. Ernest:

The Department of State received a response from Mark Hardy to the complaint you filed against them alleging a violation of the Michigan Campaign Finance Act, 1976 P.A. 388, MCL 169.201 *et seq.* A copy of the response is provided as an enclosure with this letter.

You may file a rebuttal statement after reviewing the enclosed response. If you elect to file a rebuttal statement, you are required to do so within 10 business days of the date of this letter. The rebuttal statement may be emailed to [BOERegulatory@Michigan.gov](mailto:BOERegulatory@Michigan.gov) or mailed to the Department of State, Bureau of Elections, Richard H. Austin Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, 430 West Allegan Street, Lansing, Michigan 48918.

Sincerely,

Regulatory Section  
Bureau of Elections  
Michigan Department of State

c: Mark Hardy  
Enclosure



Michigan Department of State  
Bureau of Elections  
Richard H Austin Building – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
430 West Allegan Street  
Lansing, MI 48918

RECEIVED/FILED  
MICHIGAN DEPT OF STATE  
2023 JUN -1 PM 2: 30  
ELECTIONS/GREAT SEAL

May 30, 2023

Campaign Finance Complaint #23-031  
Ernest vs Hardy

I'm responding to a complaint filed against me regarding violation of MCL 169.247, R 169.36 stating printed materials not containing "paid for by" statement listing my name & address of the committee purchased. I don't feel I fall under this situation for the following reasons.

I am not a Committee or Campaign or PAC or BQC but a private citizen, a taxpayer & a school district resident.

I raised no money for any materials objecting to a school bond proposal on the ballot May 2, 2023. ALL costs were paid out of my own pocket, fully self-funded.

All signs I handmade that said "VOTE NO" were placed ONLY by request & permission by local residents.

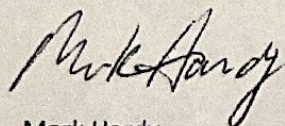
No signs were randomly placed anywhere. They were purposely placed by like-minded citizens.

All advertisements placed in the SUN & NEWS j-adgraphics.com were self-funded by me as a concerned citizen.

The signs & newspaper ads that opposed this past school bond proposal were in my right as a citizen and the right for others to display on their private property and for me to print in the local newspaper freely.

Freedom of speech is a principle that supports the freedom of an individual or a community to articulate their opinions & ideas without the fear of retaliation, censorship or legal sanction. Therefore, I don't believe I am involved in any violation of Michigan Campaign Finance rules.

Respectfully,



Mark Hardy  
5695 Johnson St SE  
Caledonia MI 49316