



State of Washington
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

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Memo

To: Commissioners
From: Sean Flynn, General Counsel
Date: August 19, 2024
Re: APA Rulemaking Petition re Treasurer Training

The petitioner, Conner Edwards, submitted a rulemaking petition on July 24, 2024. The petition requests the Commission to adopt a rule that would require campaign treasurers to certify completion of a PDC compliance training course or video prior to filing the campaign registration.

Under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), a person may petition an agency requesting the adoption, repeal, or amendment of a rule. Within 60 days of the submission of a petition, the agency must either deny the petition, or initiate the rulemaking process. If the Commission denies the petition, it must state its reasons for the denial, addressing the concerns raised and alternative means of addressing the concerns, where appropriate.

As with this petitioner's previous submissions this petition seeks to influence the policy decisions of the agency, and staff continues to recommend denying these petitions in recognition of the agency strategic planning process, which the Commission uses to plan and prioritize the use of agency resources. In addition, this petition, like the other petitions, brings up issues that previously have been considered and addressed by the Commission. Specifically, legislation was introduced in 2019 (SB 5388) to require all campaign treasurers to certify completion of a PDC training course. Discussion of that proposal generally concluded that while additional training was a worthwhile pursuit, increased enforcement and penalization was not an effective approach. The bill was converted into a budget proviso, providing funding to the PDC to develop a training course that would be accessible to campaign treasurers.

Since 2019, the PDC has continued to build out its training program. The Commission endorsed this work in 2020 by naming expansion of training program a key strategic plan project. Today, PDC produces online and in-person trainings, as well as published guidance, that are curated (see: <https://www.pdc.wa.gov/registration-reporting/candidates-committees/training-and-resources>) and updated frequently. PDC training materials, including 12 training videos for candidates and committees alone with more than 10,000 views, are widely used by the filer community. Staff has not identified any need to revisit the policy decisions made in 2019 or otherwise mandate the use of such services within the agency enforcement process.