

Corporation Pays Penalty for Facilitating Corporate Contributions

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Earlier this summer, the Federal Election Commission (FEC) collected more than \$40,000 in civil penalties from Westar Energy, Inc., several of its former officials and one of its outside lobbyists in connection with a corporate-organized fundraising scheme.

In the conciliation agreements from Matter Under Review 5573(MUR), the FEC outlined a fundraising plan initiated and orchestrated by corporate officials and the outside lobbyist. In all, corporate officials solicited and collected more than \$40,000 in contributions to federal candidates and committees, some of which were mailed to the candidates at the company's expense and all of which were collected and forwarded by corporate officials in violation of federal law. According to the conciliation agreement, impermissible "facilitation" includes "*inter alia*, directing staff to plan, organize or carry out a fundraising project as part of their work responsibilities and using corporate resources and providing materials for the purpose of transmitting or delivering contributions, such as stamps, envelopes or other similar items." More information on the MUR, including relevant documents and conciliation agreements, can be found on the FEC's website.

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