



2409 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 226-5751
(202) 226-5782 FAX

ROBERT A. ROE FEDERAL BUILDING
200 FEDERAL PLAZA, SUITE 500
PATERSON, NJ 07606
(973) 523-5152
(973) 523-0637 FAX

<http://pascrell.house.gov>
bill.pascrell@mail.house.gov

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

October 28, 2019

Ellen Weintraub
Chair
Federal Election Commission
1050 First Street NE
Washington, D.C. 20463

Dear Chair Weintraub:

I write to ask the Federal Election Commission (FEC) immediately open an investigation into Donald Trump's presidential campaign debts to local law enforcement for public safety and protection services provided at campaign events.

As of today, I understand that Donald Trump's presidential campaign has at least 10 open and outstanding unpaid invoices from local law enforcement and fire services dating back to 2016.^{i ii} These outstanding invoices total more than \$841,000 for work, overtime, and protective services. This burden has mostly fallen on small to mid-sized departments, such as those of Erie, PAⁱⁱⁱ, Burlington, VT^{iv v}, Lebanon, OH^{vi}, Duluth, MN^{vii}, and El Paso, TX^{viii}, who have invoiced Donald Trump's presidential campaign for repayment.

The FEC requires political committees to file regular receipt and disbursement requirements that disclose, among other information the amount and nature of outstanding debts.^{ix} The FEC also requires that political campaigns report disputed debts if the creditor has provided something of value to the campaign.^x Finally, the FEC demands that all debts and obligations owed by a political campaign be continuously reported until extinguished.^{xi}

When a President or presidential candidate visits a town or city for a political event, the U.S. Secret Service often requests assistance from local law enforcement to ensure the safety of all attendees of their event. However, under existing law neither the Secret Service nor the presidential campaign is required to reimburse local law enforcement for additional manpower hours and work provided in connection to such events. Traditionally, though, political campaigns agree verbally or through written contract to reimburse local law enforcement for public safety and protective services required by the U.S. Secret Service.

The unique costs of Trump campaign rallies on our communities themselves has been well-documented. According to a June 2019 report issued by the Center for Public Integrity, political events hosted by Donald Trump's campaign place significant burdens on local police and fire departments because of high incidents of violence.^{xii} Similarly, a March 2018 study conducted by the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine found that cities hosting a Trump campaign event experienced on average 2.3 more assaults than they would expect on a

typical day – an increase not associated with campaign events of other presidential candidates during the same time period.^{xiii}

The U.S. Secret Service often requires significant manpower and overtime from local public safety offices for crowd control, traffic management, and maintaining order at these political events^{xiv}. These events draw crowds far larger than the local officials are accustomed to handling. The work and assistance provided by these officers ensures these political events run smoothly and safely for all involved, including the President of the United States and candidates for our highest office. This is assuredly “something of value” provided “by a creditor to a political committee.”^{xv} As such, these debts and disputed debts must be reported accordingly.

Donald Trump’s presidential campaign may ignore their obligation to reimburse local officials for the significant assistance provided at these political events. But FEC regulations on reporting disputed debts clearly state that these disputes must be reported until the dispute is resolved.^{xvi}

Failing to reimburse local law enforcement departments for services rendered is not entirely unique to Donald Trump’s campaign. However, past candidates involved in debt disputes with local public safety officials, such as Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) in his campaign for President in 2016, have reported these disputed debts on their quarterly filings with the FEC, which is to be done on quarterly Schedule C or D filings.^{xvii} To date, Donald Trump’s presidential campaign has not reported these disputed debts on quarterly filings to FEC.^{xix}

As a Co-Chair of the House Law Enforcement Caucus and former Mayor of Paterson, New Jersey, I know local police departments are often cash-strapped and face significant resource deficits. These officers’ service and dedication to keeping our communities safe is invaluable and cannot be understated. It is inappropriate for anyone – foremost the President of the United States – to contend that assistance and protective services provided by local police officers at political rallies is not something of value.

I ask that the FEC promptly open an investigation into this impropriety. Thank you for your time and attention to my request.

Sincerely,



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress

cc: Lisa J. Stevenson, Acting General Counsel, Federal Election Commission

ⁱ <https://publicintegrity.org/federal-politics/donald-trump-police-cities-bills-maga-rallies/>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.politico.com/news/2019/10/08/trump-rallies-unpaid-bills-039631>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6140450-Erie-Pa-DOC042519-04252019080858.html>

^{iv} <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6140445-Burlington-Police-Invoice-Trump-Event-1-7-16.html>

^v <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6140444-Burlington-Fire-Invoice-2016.html>

-
- vi <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6143048-Lebanon-Invoice.html>
- vii <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6140481-Trump-Costs-Duluth-6-20-18-Police-Costs.html>
- viii <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6140449-EIPaso-Invoice.html>
- ix 52 U.S.C. § 30104(b)(8)
- x 11 C.F.R. § 116.10(a)
- xi 11 C.F.R. § 104.11(a)
- xii <https://publicintegrity.org/federal-politics/donald-trump-police-cities-bills-maga-rallies/>
- xiii <https://www.pennmedicine.org/news/news-releases/2018/march/assaults-spiked-on-trump-rally-days-during-2016-election>
- xiv <https://publicintegrity.org/federal-politics/donald-trump-police-cities-bills-maga-rallies/>
- xv 11 C.F.R. § 116.10(a)
- xvi 11 C.F.R. § 116.10(a)
- xvii <https://docquery.fec.gov/cgi-bin/forms/C00577130/>
- xviii 11 C.F.R. § 104.3(a)
- xix <https://docquery.fec.gov/cgi-bin/forms/C00580100/>