

Texas Ethics Commission Concludes Fall 2017 Ethics Symposium

AUSTIN (October 25, 2017) On Friday, October 20, 2017, the Texas Ethics Commission (TEC) hosted its Fall 2017 Ethics Symposium at the South Texas College of Law in Houston, Texas. The auditorium was filled to capacity after nearly 240 people registered to attend the event featuring presentations from State Rep. Sarah Davis (District 134), TEC Commissioners Chase Untermeyer, Katie Kennedy, and Chris Flood, and TEC Chair Steve Wolens. Those in attendance included candidates, officeholders, judges, campaign treasurers and managers, political consultants, Political Committee (PAC) representatives, and election lawyers looking to gain insight and sharpen their skills in the ever-evolving and complex area of Texas election law. Attorneys and accountants received 6.5 continuing education credit hours for attending the entire program.

The day-long event included presentations from TEC General Counsel Ian Steusloff, Assistant General Counsel Joseph Keeney, and Director of Enforcement Angela Goodwin regarding laws restricting the acceptance of gifts, political advertising disclosure requirements, the duties and responsibilities of local filing authorities, prohibitions on the use of public funds or resources for political advertising, and efforts to crack down on public corruption. Goodwin led a panel discussion on those efforts that included comments by Special Agent Vanessa Walther (FBI), Major Jeffrey Collins (Texas Rangers), Tom Berg (Harris County First Assistant District Attorney), and Stuart Tallichet (Prosecutor in the Harris County District Attorney's Public Corruption Division).

In the afternoon, break-out sessions were led by TEC Deputy Director of Enforcement, Nick Espinosa, Assistant General Counsels James Tinley and Anitra Abdullah-Levy, and Legal Assistant Amy Barden, who provided vital information to attendees interested in learning more about the TEC's campaign finance electronic filing application, along with specific campaign finance and disclosure laws governing candidates, officeholders, and PACs.

The TEC will conduct a training program on November 30, 2017, at Texas A&M International University in Laredo, sponsored by Senator Judith Zaffirini. Information about the training in Laredo, as well as any other future sessions, will be posted on the TEC website (www.ethics.state.tx.us)

About the Texas Ethics Commission

The Commission's primary goal is to promote public confidence in electoral and governmental processes by enforcing and administering certain laws, including campaign finance, lobby, and personal financial disclosure laws. Its mission is to control and reduce the cost of elections; eliminate opportunities for undue influence over elections and governmental actions; fully disclose information related to expenditures and contributions for elections and for petitioning the government; enhance the potential for individual participation in electoral and governmental processes; and ensure public confidence and trust in government.

-END