



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 11, 2023

CONTACT: Scott Kendall

scott@cashiongilmore.com

APOC Staff Investigation: Ranked Choice Education “Church” & Other Repeal Groups Violated Campaign Finance Laws

Pastor inflicted “substantial” public harm in alleged effort to hide funding

ANCHORAGE—The Alaska Public Offices Commission (APOC) released a [staff report](#) concluding that backers of an effort to repeal open primaries and ranked choice voting violated more than a dozen campaign finance laws.

Among the APOC staff findings:

- Art Mathias, founder of Wellspring Ministries and Wellspring Fellowship, President of Ranked Choice Education Association (RCEA), a Washington-based “church,” and Director of Alaskans for Honest Election (AHE), “contributed his funds to RCEA knowing that they would be repurposed to support AHE through contributions” and contributed “\$90,000 [to] AHE using RCEA as a third party conduit”
- Alaskans for Honest Elections, Alaskans for Honest Government, and Ranked Choice Education Association all failed to file required reports on time, and failed to place a ‘paid for by’ on their websites.

Staff recommended a total minimum fine of \$59,205 and noted the respondents could face potential maximum fines of \$343,000.

In addition, an Alaskans for Better Elections (ABE) Board Member registered a complaint with the Internal Revenue Service, alleging that the Ranked Choice Education Association “church” is abusing its religious nonprofit status by funding partisan election reform efforts.

The APOC staff report supports the majority of allegations in ABE’s July [complaint](#) outlining suspected campaign finance law violations by Alaskans for Honest Elections, Alaskans for Honest Government, Wellspring Ministries, Ranked Choice Education Association, and Mr. Mathias. The Alaska Public Offices Commission will consider the staff report at a hearing before issuing a final order.

###