

Complaint 3 Ruling IUSG Election Commission

Issued: Monday, April 1, Bridge IU v. Vision

The Election Commission sincerely apologizes for any misguidance due to previous information stated through the text message to Bridge IU. The Election Commission strives to promote fair and equal elections at all times. The text message from Hannah Eaton contained incorrect information about tabling with dogs. At the time of this text message, past precedent and other members of the Election Commission were not consulted. Hannah Eaton should have asked Bridge IU to submit their question as a formal advisory opinion instead of replying to the message. Again, the Election Commission recognizes this mistake and emphasizes that it was not intentional. Bridge IU assumed that dogs were not allowed during tabling, asking instead whether posting about dogs on social media was acceptable, which Hannah Eaton then confirmed. If Bridge IU wanted to know if they could have a dog at their table, they could have submitted this question to the Election Commission email and requested a formal advisory opinion.

The Election Commission would like to remind all present and future tickets that questions regarding conduct during elections should be asked by submitting an advisory opinion through the Election Commission email. The purpose of having the cell phone contact is for emergencies or other situations warranting a quick response, as stated at the All-Candidate call-out meeting.

The complaint from Bridge IU addresses Section 601 of the Procedural Election Code which details instances of voter fraud. When reviewing what constitutes voter fraud, the Election Commission does not find that Vision's use of the dog in their tabling efforts constitutes a violation of Section 601. There is no evidence to suggest that Vision used the dog in an effort to intimidate voters or offer voters goods valued at more than \$2.00, prevent voters from casting votes, change any votes after they had been cast, pressured voters in the immediate process of voting, or provide any technology to voters through personal solicitation. Vision stated that people who had already voted for Bridge IU still came to pet the dog, which shows that people were not petting the dog solely because they were going to vote for Vision.

Upon further reflection, the Election Commission concurs with Vision's assessment that finances does not pertain to the complaint about voter fraud filed by Bridge IU. However, according to Section 704 of the Procedural Election Code, the Election Commission has the authority to investigate a candidate or ticket if there is reasonable belief that a violation occurred. When considering whether the dog should have been a campaign expenditure, according to Section 401 of the Procedural Election Code, the Election Commission finds that this is unnecessary. Vision provided sufficient proof that the dog was not bought solely for the purpose of the campaign, and was instead utilizing a dog already belonging to a member of the campaign. The 2017 advisory opinion stated that "*If a member of a campaign is fortunate to*

have a canine companion then we cannot say that the dog's primary value is consumed during the campaign and therefore not a campaign expenditure. ”

Therefore, for the reasons stated above, the Election Commission finds no violation in this complaint.

Signed,
IUSG Election Commission
Hannah Eaton, Chair
Shems Al-Ubaidi
Bethany Dillow
Kathleen Gonzales
Lucy Newell
Jeffrey Bae
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