


Democrat files complaint against secretary of state candidate

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The state's ethics watchdog agency revealed Friday that it is looking into allegations that secretary of state candidate Dan Schnur may have violated an honorarium ban while running for office, but a representative of Schnur said the complaint is without merit.

The allegations in a formal complaint filed by an attorney for the head of the Los Angeles County Democratic Party are being investigated by the state Fair Political Practices Commission, for which Schnur is a former chairman.

Party Chairman Eric C. Bauman alleged that during a court case challenging Schnur's request for a ballot designation of "Political Reform Advocate," Schnur said he was compensated \$12,500 for making speeches between January 2013 and March 2014.

The April 11 complaint drafted by attorney Stephen J. Kaufman says Schnur became a candidate in January 2014 and it cites a section of the state government code saying that no candidate for elective state office shall accept any honorarium.

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"Yet, Schnur's [court] declaration and Form 700 — both of which were signed under oath — indicate that he received payments to make speeches through March 2014 — in apparent violation of the state honorarium ban," the complaint says.

Schnur, a former Republican running as a no-party-preference candidate, denied the allegations through a campaign spokesman.

"Dan Schnur has never received any speaking fees since becoming a candidate," said spokesman Rob Stutzman. "The complaint filed by the Democrat Chairman of LA County is without merit. One would think Mr. Bauman would be more concerned about three senators indicted from his own party still being paid by taxpayers."

FPPC Enforcement Chief Gary S. Winuk on Friday released a letter to Kaufman "to notify you that the Enforcement Division of the Fair Political Practices Commission ... will investigate the allegation(s), under the jurisdiction of the commission, of the sworn complaint you submitted in the above-referenced matter."

Winuk said he would notify Kaufman of the final disposition of the case when it is reached.

"However, please be advised that at this time we have not made any determination about the validity of the allegation(s) you have made or about the culpability, if any, of the person(s) you identified in your complaint," Winuk wrote.

