

News Release

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TPJ Urges Appeals-Court Candidate Melissa Goodwin To Return \$20,274 in Illegal Contributions

(Austin) -- 3rd Court of Appeals Candidate Melissa Goodwin has yet to return \$20,274 in illegal political funds that she used to narrowly prevail in the March Republican primary, according to her most recent campaign reports filed with the Texas Ethics Commission.

Texans for Public Justice filed a still-pending complaint about Goodwin's illegal campaign funds with the Ethics Commission on March 25. As of her latest campaign report filed on July 22, Goodwin still had not returned the illegal funds. Goodwin's next campaign reports are due October 4.

Prior to the March primary, Goodwin reported that she received a total of \$25,274 in campaign contributions and loans from her in-laws, Bob and Paca Goodwin. Texas' judicial campaign laws—which Goodwin would interpret if elected as a state judge— expressly prohibit her from taking more than \$5,000 from her in-laws.

“Goodwin’s illicit campaign contributions likely tipped the balance in her tight primary,” said Texans for Public Justice Director Craig McDonald. “She should return the donations before they distort the outcome of the general election.”

“When illicit campaign funds are pointed out to a would-be judge, why wouldn’t she return them immediately? What’s wrong with this wanna-be judge’s judgment?”

Goodwin won the March 2 primary with 53 percent of the vote after spending \$48,587. The \$20,274 in illegal in-law funds account for 42 percent of all the money that Goodwin spent on the primary. The Texas Ethics Commission, which may not rule on the case until after the November election, can impose civil penalties equal to three times the excess contributions.

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