



**COUNTY OF DUTCHESS**  
DEPARTMENT OF LAW

July 22, 2021

VIA EMAIL AND FIRST-CLASS MAIL:

Ms. Whitney Lundy  
"GoFundMe" Fundraising Organizer  
75 South Quaker Lane  
Hyde Park, NY 12538

RE: "GoFundMe" Web-Page Entitled "Help Protect the Vote in Dutchess County, NY, Dutchess County Independent Reapportionment Commission Seeks Financial Support for Legal Expenses!," Created on or about Saturday, July 17, 2021  
Our File: G-1813-A

**DEMAND TO CEASE AND DESIST SOLICITING DONATIONS  
AND RETURN ALL SOLICITED FUNDS RECEIVED**

Dear Ms. Lundy:

Please be advised that the above-referenced "GoFundMe" page which purports to be by and for the benefit of "We, the members of the Commission" is without legal authority. Cease and desist from soliciting donations and return the funds received.

In the GoFundMe webpage referenced above, private individuals hold themselves out as representatives of the County of Dutchess and/or the Dutchess County Independent Reapportionment Commission to solicit funds. This is a misrepresentation.

There are currently seven vacancies on the Dutchess County Independent Reapportionment Commission as previous appointments to such Commission "no longer have force and effect" pursuant to the terms of the enabling local law. Moreover, the Dutchess County Legislature has since approved by majority vote a local law, Resolution No. 2021111, to create a replacement Commission in lieu of the prior Commission previously disbanded. Resolution No. 2021111, which is pending a public hearing, signature of the County Executive, and filing with the Secretary of State, states that "a person who was an appointed member of any previous commission shall no longer be eligible to serve on the commission."

First, this group of private individuals have no right to hold themselves out as representatives of the County of Dutchess nor as "the Dutchess County Independent Reapportionment Commission." They do not represent the County of Dutchess in any capacity. Second, assuming arguendo that the sponsors and/or administrators of the GoFundMe webpage referenced above are legitimate Dutchess County Independent Reapportionment Commission members, according to the New York State Comptroller's Opinion 78-256, public officials are prohibited from soliciting donations absent specific statutory authority to do so. Absent such authority, solicitations are contrary to public policy.

For the foregoing reasons, this solicitation of donations must cease and desist, and all funds immediately returned to donors. GoFundMe has been contacted directly regarding the lack of legal authority to create the webpage.

Very truly yours,



Caroline E. Blackburn  
Dutchess County Attorney



Karen E. Hagstrom  
Dutchess County Legislature Counsel

CEB/CRC/kvh

VIA EMAIL AND FIRST CLASS MAIL:

cc: Gregg Pulver, Chair, Dutchess County Legislature  
Leigh Wager, Clerk, Dutchess County Legislature  
Marcus J. Molinaro, Dutchess County Executive

VIA FIRST CLASS MAIL:

New York State Comptroller  
New York State Attorney General  
Federal Trade Commission

VIA EMAIL AND FIRST CLASS MAIL:

Richard Keller-Coffey  
Dale Culver  
Keri Peterson  
John Pelosi  
Hance Huston  
Christie VanHorne

VIA EMAIL: [legal@gofundme.com](mailto:legal@gofundme.com)