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New Charges Filed in Petition Fraud Case

Hall County Attorney Marty Klein and Attorney General Mike Hilgers announced the filing of new criminal charges today in Hall County, part of an effort to protect the integrity of Nebraska’s ballot initiative process. Those charges are a product of the ongoing investigation into fraudulent signatures found on petition pages submitted in support of the Nebraska Medical Cannabis Regulation and Medical Cannabis Patient Protection initiatives. Twenty-four charges of Official Misconduct, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 28-924, have been filed against Jacy Todd, a notary public from York.

Attorney General Hilgers and County Attorney Klein previously announced a felony charge for false swearing against a petition circulator, Michael Egbert of Grand Island.

As set forth in the probable cause affidavit underlying the new charges, investigators have uncovered evidence that Todd notarized petition pages outside of the presence of petition circulators, including Egbert, who dropped off pages containing signatures at Todd’s Grand Island business, Herban Pulse. In doing so, Todd knowingly violated Nebraska law governing the behavior of a notary public.

“Hall County Election Commissioner Tracy Overstreet and the people with whom she works take election integrity very seriously. Their diligence and thoroughness in the petition signature verification and the work of the investigation team from the Hall County Sheriff’s Office led to these charges. Voters in Hall County should be confident in signing petitions and casting their ballots in Hall County,” stated Hall County Attorney Marty Klein.

“Election integrity is the bedrock of our democratic republic, and the public expects that those seeking to put an issue on the ballot follow the law. And

this is particularly true where notaries are involved in the election process. Notaries are officers of the public and held to a higher standard of trust and honesty. Here, our investigation uncovered a significant abuse of the notary process and the false representations that petitions were properly notarized when, in fact, they were not,” said Attorney General Mike Hilgers.

The Attorney General’s investigation is ongoing and is not limited to Hall County.

“Our investigation is ongoing,” said Attorney General Hilgers, “and we will work with our local law enforcement partners to hold those who would interfere with our elections accountable under the law.”

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