

November 4, 2014

Paul D. Laney
Cass County Sheriff
211 9th Street South
Fargo, ND 58103

Bob Rost
Grand Forks County Sheriff
122 South 5th Street, Suite 210
PO Box 12608
Grand Forks, ND 58208

Dear Sheriffs Laney and Rost:

We were today made aware of complaints from North Dakota State University and University of North Dakota students who had received the attached email message. As you can see, the email message was directed to these students' ".edu" addresses by the "Brighter Future Fund," a so-called "Super PAC" with close ties to the Odney Advertising agency. Given that the email message was sent in support of the election of Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring to email accounts carried on by the North Dakota University System on behalf of thousands of college students across our state, we are seriously concerned that this action crosses a line from mere shady campaign tactics to a violation of North Dakota's Corrupt Practices Act (N.D.C.C. Chapter 16.1-10).

By way of background, Pat Finken, President of Odney Advertising, sent the following email to the North Dakota University System in September of this year:

"I would like to request the names, addresses (multiple if more than one on file), email addresses (multiple if more than one of file) and phone numbers for all students attending NDUS institutions. Please include the school they are attending. If possible, I would like to receive the information in a spreadsheet format."

Finken admitted that this request was made on behalf of his political clients, claiming in a media report that: *"We have a variety of clients both political and non-political that are interested in reaching college students. And that's why we're accessing this information"* (WDAY, 9/30/14). Finken's explicit admission that he had caused state employees to expend time and effort for what was admittedly a political purpose was disturbing to us then, and the fact that Odney has used the email services carried on by the state to directly support the election of a candidate on the ballot in today's statewide general election is even more upsetting.

Accordingly, we respectfully ask your offices to open up an investigation into whether the Corrupt Practices Act was violated by Odney, its employees, or any other proper person acting on behalf of the Brighter Future Fund during the 2014 election cycle. Indeed, we feel very strongly that using state resources to gather a list of thousands of state-provided email addresses which are then utilized in support of the election of a partisan candidate for office a day before an election are precisely the type of activities that the Corrupt Practices Act was written to outlaw.

Sincerely,

Senator Mac Schneider
District 42

Representative Kylie Oversen
District 42

Representative Joshua Boschee
District 44

SEE ATTACHMENT: Ag Students for Doug Goehring (Email message, 11/3/14)

From: <info@brighterfutureend.com>
Date: November 3, 2014 at 3:10:20 PM CST
To: REDACTED
Subject: Ag Students for Doug Goehring

Our friend Doug Goehring is running for North Dakota Ag Commissioner. Doug is a good guy and has done a great job as ag commissioner. Our state's exports are up 70% since Doug took office and he is a major supporter of funding for ag research at our state universities.

We know that not everyone is as excited about the ag commissioner race as we are, but this office is important to all college kids too. The ag commissioner also serves on the commission that oversees the Bank of North Dakota. With Doug's support, BND has introduced new student loan consolidation programs that can help all of us make going to school more affordable.

We hope you will join with us in voting for Doug Goehring for Ag Commissioner

Sincerely,

Jodi Boe
Past President
Collegiate FFA

Nevada Turbiville
President
NDSU Collegiate Farm Bureau

Paid by Brighter Future North Dakota, Dick Hedahl Treasurer