

Hunter accused of campaign violations

by Finlay Lewis

WASHINGTON - A citizen's watchdog group filed a complaint on Wednesday with a government agency charging that Rep. Duncan Hunter's political action committee violated the federal campaign law to support the Alpine, Calif., Republican's presidential campaign.

In papers filed with the Federal Elections Committee, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington claimed that Hunter's Peace through Strength political action committee exceeded federal election spending limits when it paid for pro-Hunter TV ads in four states, including New Hampshire, site of the nation's first primary election next January.

A spokesperson for the FEC said that the commission has received the complaint, which asks the agency to investigate the matter, including CREW's claim that Hunter's committee also received individual contributions that exceed federal campaign limits.

Under the law, individuals may not give a federal election candidate more than \$2,300 per election; political action committees are limited to \$5,000 per election.

A spokesman for Hunter's presidential campaign said that the allegations are baseless.

According to Crew's complaint, Hunter's political action committee earlier this winter paid WMUR, a New Hampshire TV station, \$17,575 to air an ad featuring Hunter's support for the construction of a border fence to stop the flow of illegal immigrants from Mexico into the United States.

Hunter campaign officials say that the ad focuses on an issue - border security - and not on Hunter's presidential aspirations, and is therefore not governed by federal campaign statutes.

The CREW complaint also makes similar complaints about pro-Hunter ads aired in South Carolina, also an early primary state, North Carolina, and South Dakota.

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