



# Interim Audit Report of the Audit Division on the Friends of Todd Young

February 12, 2009 - December 31, 2010

## Why the Audit Was Done

Federal law permits the Commission to conduct audits and field investigations of any political committee that is required to file reports under the Federal Election Campaign Act (the Act). The Commission generally conducts such audits when a committee appears not to have met the threshold requirements for substantial compliance with the Act.<sup>1</sup> The audit determines whether the committee complied with the limitations, prohibitions and disclosure requirements of the Act.

## Future Action

The Commission may initiate an enforcement action, at a later time, with respect to any of the matters discussed in this report.

## About the Campaign (p. 2)

Friends of Todd Young is the principal campaign committee for Todd C. Young, Republican candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives from the state of Indiana, 9<sup>th</sup> District, and is headquartered in Bloomington, Indiana. For more information, see the chart on the Campaign Organization, p. 2.

## Financial Activity (p. 2)

• Receipts	
○ Contributions from Individuals	\$ 1,708,269
○ Contributions from Other Political Committees	233,843
○ Transfers from Authorized Committees	14,702
○ Offsets to Operating Expenditures	7,404
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 1,964,218</b>
• Disbursements	
○ Operating Expenditures	\$ 1,926,326
○ Contribution Refunds	18,200
○ Contributions to Political Committees	5,000
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$ 1,949,526</b>

## Findings and Recommendations (p. 3)

- Receipt of Apparent Prohibited Contributions
- Receipt of Contributions in Excess of the Limit
- Failure to File 48-Hour Notices

<sup>1</sup> 2 U.S.C. §438(b).

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# **Part I**

## **Background**

### **Authority for Audit**

This report is based on an audit of Friends of Todd Young (FOTY), undertaken by the Audit Division of the Federal Election Commission (the Commission) in accordance with the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971, as amended (the Act). The Audit Division conducted the audit pursuant to 2 U.S.C. §438(b), which permits the Commission to conduct audits and field investigations of any political committee that is required to file a report under 2 U.S.C. §434. Prior to conducting any audit under this subsection, the Commission must perform an internal review of reports filed by selected committees to determine if the reports filed by a particular committee meet the threshold requirements for substantial compliance with the Act. 2 U.S.C. §438(b).

### **Scope of Audit**

Following Commission-approved procedures, the Audit staff evaluated various risk factors and as a result, this audit examined:

1. the receipt of excessive contributions and loans;
2. the receipt of contributions from prohibited sources;
3. the disclosure of contributions received;
4. the disclosure of individual contributors' occupation and name of employer;
5. the consistency between reported figures and bank records;
6. the completeness of records; and
7. other committee operations necessary to the review.

## Part II Overview of Campaign

### Campaign Organization

<b>Important Dates</b>	
• Date of Registration	February 20, 2009
• Audit Coverage	February 12, 2009 - December 31, 2010
<b>Headquarters</b>	Bloomington, Indiana
<b>Bank Information</b>	
• Bank Depositories	One
• Bank Accounts	One checking account
<b>Treasurer</b>	
• Treasurer When Audit Was Conducted	Larry Ness
• Treasurer During Period Covered by Audit	Connie K. Nass
<b>Management Information</b>	
• Attended Commission Campaign Finance Seminar	No
• Who Handled Accounting and Recordkeeping Tasks	Paid Staff

### Overview of Financial Activity (Audited Amounts)

<b>Cash-on-hand @ February 12, 2010</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>
<b>Receipts</b>	
○ Contributions from Individuals	1,708,269
○ Contributions from Other Political Committees	233,843
○ Transfers from Authorized Committees	14,702
○ Offsets to Operating Expenditures	7,404
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 1,964,218</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>	
○ Operating Expenditures	1,926,326
○ Contribution Refunds	18,200
○ Contributions to Political Committees	5,000
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$ 1,949,526</b>
<b>Cash-on-hand @ December 31, 2010</b>	<b>\$ 14,692</b>

## **Part III**

### **Summaries**

#### **Finding and Recommendation**

##### **Finding 1. Receipt of Apparent Prohibited Contributions**

During audit fieldwork, a review of contributions revealed that FOTY received 24 apparent prohibited contributions totaling \$19,700. FOTY has refunded \$3,750 of the \$19,700 in apparent prohibited contributions, albeit in an untimely manner. The Audit staff recommends that FOTY demonstrate that these contributions were made with permissible funds or were refunded in a timely manner. Absent such demonstration, FOTY should resolve the remaining \$15,950 in contributions either through refund to the contributors or disgorgement to the U.S. Treasury. (For more detail, see p. 4.)

##### **Finding 2. Receipt of Contributions in Excess of the Limit**

During audit fieldwork, the Audit staff reviewed contributions from individuals. This review indicated FOTY received apparent excessive contributions totaling \$94,854. These errors occurred as a result of FOTY not resolving the excessive portion of contributions either by forwarding a presumptive letter to its contributors or issuing a refund in a timely manner. The Audit staff recommends that FOTY provide documentation demonstrating that these contributions were not excessive or, if excessive, were resolved in a timely manner. Absent such documentation, FOTY should resolve the apparent excessive contributions either through refund, disgorgement to the U.S. Treasury or by issuance of presumptive redesignation or reattribution letters. (For more detail, see p. 7.)

##### **Finding 3. Failure to File 48-Hour Notices**

During audit fieldwork, a review of contributions received during the 48-hour filing periods revealed that FOTY failed to file 48-hour notices for 51 contributions totaling \$75,700. Most of the unfiled notices were for general election contributions. The Audit staff recommends that FOTY provide evidence that it filed the 48-hour notices in a timely manner or submit any written comments it considers relevant. (For more detail, see p. 10.)

## Part IV

# Findings and Recommendations

### **Finding 1. Receipt of Apparent Prohibited Contributions**

#### **Summary**

During audit fieldwork, a review of contributions revealed that FOTY received 24 apparent prohibited contributions totaling \$19,700. FOTY has refunded \$3,750 of the \$19,700 in apparent prohibited contributions, albeit in an untimely manner. The Audit staff recommends that FOTY demonstrate that these contributions were made with permissible funds or were refunded in a timely manner. Absent such demonstration, FOTY should resolve the remaining \$15,950 in contributions either through refund to the contributors or disgorgement to the U.S. Treasury.

#### **Legal Standard**

**A. Receipt of Prohibited Contributions – General Prohibition.** Candidates and committees may not accept contributions (in the form of money, in-kind contributions or loans) from the general treasury funds of corporations. This prohibition applies to any incorporated organization, including a non-stock corporation, an incorporated membership organization, and an incorporated cooperative. 2 U.S.C. §441b.

**B. Definition of Limited Liability Company.** A limited liability company (LLC) is a business entity recognized as an LLC under the laws of the State in which it was established. 11 CFR §110.1(g)(1).

**C. Application of Limits and Prohibitions to LLC Contributions.** A contribution from an LLC is subject to contribution limits and prohibitions, depending on several factors, as explained below:

1. **LLC as Partnership.** The contribution is considered to be from a partnership if the LLC chooses to be treated as a partnership under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax rules, or if it makes no choice at all about its tax status. A partnership contribution may not exceed \$2,400 per candidate, per election, and it must be attributed to each lawful partner. 11 CFR §110.1(a), (b), (e) and (g)(2).
2. **LLC as Corporation.** The contribution is considered to be from a corporation—and is barred under the Act—if the LLC chooses to be treated as a corporation under IRS rules, or if its shares are traded publicly. 11 CFR §110.1(g)(3).
3. **LLC with Single Member.** The contribution is considered to be from a single individual if the LLC is a single-member LLC that has not chosen to be treated as a corporation under IRS rules. 11 CFR §110.1(g)(4).

**D. Limited Liability Company's Responsibility to Notify Recipient Committee.** At the time it makes the contribution, an LLC shall provide to the recipient committee information on how the contribution is to be attributed and affirm that it is eligible to make the contribution. 11 CFR §110.1(g)(5).

**E. Organizations Financing.** Organizations that are not political committees under the Act that make contributions and expenditures, but do not qualify as political committees under 11 CFR 100.5, must demonstrate through a reasonable accounting method that the organization has received sufficient funds subject to the limitations and prohibitions of the Act to make such contribution, expenditure or payment. 11 CFR §102.5(b)

**F. Questionable Contributions.** If a committee receives a contribution that appears to be prohibited (a questionable contribution), it must follow the procedures below.

1. Within 10 days of the treasurer's receipt of the questionable contribution, the committee must either:
  - Return the contribution to the contributor without depositing it; or
  - Deposit the contribution (and follow the steps below). 11 CFR §103.3(b)(1).
2. If the committee deposits the questionable contribution, it may not spend its funds and must be prepared to refund them. It must therefore maintain sufficient funds to make the refunds or establish a separate account in a campaign depository for possibly illegal contributions. 11 CFR §103.3(b)(4).
3. The committee must keep a written record explaining why the contribution may be prohibited and must include this information when reporting the receipt of the contribution. 11 CFR §103.3(b)(5).
4. Within 30 days of the treasurer's receipt of the questionable contribution, the committee must make at least one written or oral request for evidence that the contribution is legal. Evidence of legality includes, for example, a written statement from the contributor explaining why the contribution is legal or an oral explanation that is recorded by the committee in a memorandum. 11 CFR §103.3(b)(1).
5. Within these 30 days, the committee must either:
  - Confirm the legality of the contribution; or
  - Refund the contribution to the contributor and note the refund on the report covering the period in which the refund was made. 11 CFR §103.3(b)(1).
 Any contribution that appears to be illegal or is deposited into a campaign depository shall not be used for any disbursements by the political committee until the contribution has been determined to be legal. The political committee must either establish a separate account in a campaign depository for such contributions or maintain sufficient funds to make all such refunds. 11 CFR §103.3(b)(4).

## **Facts and Analysis**

### **A. Facts**

During audit fieldwork, the Audit staff's sample review of contributions received by FOTY identified contributions that appeared to be from prohibited sources. As a result, Audit staff performed a review of all deposit batches for prohibited contributions. This full review identified the following possible prohibited contributions:

- 16 checks from LLCs totaling \$14,650; and
- eight checks from corporations totaling \$5,050.



For the contributions from corporations, the Audit staff verified the corporate status of the entities, as of the date of the contribution, with the various Secretary of State offices and a registered agent of a company. For contributions from the LLCs, FOTY provided no documentation that stated whether the companies elected to be treated as a partnership or corporation for tax purposes.

FOTY did not maintain a separate account for the possible prohibited contributions. A review of cash balances determined that FOTY did not maintain sufficient funds to make refunds of the possible prohibited contributions.<sup>2</sup>

Prior to audit fieldwork, FOTY sent out letters to contributors regarding the permissibility and allocation of the possible prohibited LLC, LLP and corporate contributions. Specifically, FOTY sent these letters on March 11, 2011 and May 6, 2011.

Of the 24 possible prohibited contributions totaling \$19,700 identified by the Audit staff, FOTY refunded contributions from corporations totaling \$3,750; however, these refunds were untimely. Therefore, the remaining amount of possible prohibited contributions is \$15,950 (\$19,700 - \$3,750). As of this report, evidence demonstrates that three of the refund checks totaling \$2,750 have not been negotiated.

#### **B. Interim Audit Report & Audit Division Recommendation**

The Audit staff discussed this matter with FOTY representatives at the exit conference and provided a schedule of the apparent prohibited contributions identified in the review. FOTY representatives did not have any comments on this matter. However, a FOTY representative stated that they were waiting on obtaining more documentation.

In response to the exit conference, FOTY representatives provided some copies of letters that had been sent to contributors requesting information about the permissibility of their contribution. However, the committee sent all the letters subsequent to the 2010 election cycle and the Audit staff received no further information relating to the 24 possible prohibited contributions it identified.

The Audit staff recommends that, within 30 calendar days of service of this report, FOTY:

- Provide evidence demonstrating that the remaining 20<sup>3</sup> contributions in question were made with permissible funds (for contributions in question from LLCs, FOTY should provide a statement from each entity explaining its tax treatment or a copy of IRS Form 8832);
- Refund \$15,950, the remaining amount of apparent prohibited contributions that either have not been refunded or have not received a statement or explanation from the contributor attesting to the permissibility of the contributions (FOTY should provide evidence of such refunds, such as copies of the front and back of negotiated refund checks, or evidence that the contribution was permissible);

<sup>2</sup> FOTY's primary election was on 5/4/2010. The cash-on-hand analysis showed that, on 4/28/2010, funds were not sufficient to make the necessary refunds.

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that one of the contributions was only partially refunded.

- Disgorge the remaining funds (\$15,950) to the U.S. Treasury and provide evidence of such disgorgement; or
- If funds are not available to make the necessary refunds or disgorgement, disclose the contributions requiring refunds on Schedule D (Debts and Obligations) until funds become available to satisfy this obligation.

## **Finding 2. Receipt of Contributions in Excess of the Limit**

### **Summary**

During audit fieldwork, the Audit staff reviewed contributions from individuals. This review indicated FOTY received apparent excessive contributions totaling \$94,854. These errors occurred as a result of FOTY not resolving the excessive portion of contributions either by forwarding a presumptive letter to its contributors or issuing a refund in a timely manner. The Audit staff recommends that FOTY provide documentation demonstrating that these contributions were not excessive or, if excessive, were resolved in a timely manner. Absent such documentation, FOTY should resolve the apparent excessive contributions either through refund, disgorgement to the U.S. Treasury or by issuance of presumptive redesignation or reattribution letters.

### **Legal Standard**

**A. Authorized Committee Limits.** For the 2010 election, an authorized committee may not receive more than a total of \$2,400 per election from any one person.

2 U.S.C. §441a(a)(1)(A), 11 CFR §§110.1(a) and (b) and 110.9.

**B. Handling Contributions That Appear Excessive.** If a committee receives a contribution that appears to be excessive, the committee must either:

- Return the questionable check to the donor; or
- Deposit the contributions and keep enough money on hand to cover all potential refunds until the legality of the contribution is established. If deposited, the committee must seek a reattribution or a redesignation of the excessive portion, following the instructions provided in the Commission regulations (see below for explanations of reattribution and redesignation). If the committee does not receive a proper reattribution or redesignation within 60 days of receiving the excessive contribution, refund the excessive portion to the donor.

11 CFR §103.3(b)(3), (4) and (5).

**C. Joint Contributions.** Any contribution made by more than one person, except for a contribution made by a partnership, shall include the signature of each contributor on the check, money order or other negotiable instrument or in a separate writing. A joint contribution is attributed equally to each donor unless a statement indicates that the funds should be divided differently. 11 CFR §110.1(k)(1) and (2).

**D. Reattribution of Excessive Contributions.** Commission regulations permit committees to ask donors of excessive contributions (or contributions that exceed the committee's net debts outstanding) whether they had intended their contribution to be a

joint contribution from more than one person and whether they would like to reattribute the excess amount to another contributor. The committee must inform the contributor that:

1. The reattribution must be signed by both contributors;
2. The reattribution must be received by the committee within 60 days of the committee's receipt of the original contribution; and
3. The contributor may instead request a refund of the excessive amount.  
11 CFR §110.1(k)(3).

Within 60 days of receiving the excessive contribution, the committee must either receive the proper reattribution or refund the excessive portion to the donor. 11 CFR §§103.3(b)(3) and 110.1(k)(3)(ii)(B). Further, a political committee must retain written records concerning the reattribution in order for it to be effective. 11 CFR §110.1(l)(5).

Notwithstanding the above, any excessive portion of a contribution that was made on a written instrument imprinted with the names of more than one individual may be attributed among the individuals listed unless instructed otherwise by the contributor(s). The committee shall notify each contributor:

1. How the contribution was attributed; and
2. That the contributor may instead request a refund of the excessive amount.  
11 CFR §110.1(k)(3)(ii)(B).

**E. Redesignation of Excessive Contributions.** The committee may ask the contributor to redesignate the excess portion of the contribution for use in another election. The committee must inform the contributor that:

1. The redesignation must be signed by the contributor;
2. The redesignation must be received by the committee within 60 days of the committee's receipt of the original contribution; and
3. The contributor may instead request a refund of the contribution.  
11 CFR §110.1(b)(5)(ii)(A).

Within 60 days of receiving the excessive contribution, the committee must either receive the proper redesignation or refund the contribution to the donor. 11 CFR §103.3(b)(3) and 110.1(b)(5)(ii)(A). Further, a political committee must retain written records concerning the redesignation in order for it to be effective. 11 CFR §110.1(l)(5).

When an individual makes an excessive contribution to a candidate's authorized committee, the campaign may presumptively redesignate the excessive portion to the general election if the contribution:

1. Is made before that candidate's primary election;
2. Is not designated in writing for a particular election;
3. Would be excessive if treated as a primary election contribution; and
4. As redesignated, does not cause the contributor to exceed any other contribution limit.

The committee is required to notify the contributor of the redesignation within 60 days of the treasurer's receipt of the contribution, and must offer the contributor the option to receive a refund instead. 11 CFR 110.1(b)(5)(i)(D)(ii).

## **Facts and Analysis**

### **A. Facts**

During audit fieldwork, the Audit staff utilized a combination of sample testing and focused reviews to identify apparent excessive contributions from individuals totaling \$94,854. This total is comprised of \$94,554<sup>4</sup>, the projected dollar value of the sample errors and \$300, the result of a focused review of the remaining contributions. These apparent excessive contributions were the result of FOTY not resolving the excessive portion of contributions by forwarding a presumptive letter to its contributors informing them how their contribution was redesignated/attribution or refunding the excessive contribution. FOTY untimely resolved excessive contributions totaling \$11,820 prior to audit notification by issuing refunds.

### **B. Interim Audit Report & Audit Division Recommendation**

The Audit staff discussed this matter at the exit conference and provided FOTY representatives with a schedule of the apparent excessive contributions. The representatives asked general questions about presumptive letters and issuance of refunds.

In response to the exit conference, FOTY representatives submitted documentation relative to the apparent excessive contributions. The Audit staff received copies of three refund checks, dated in August of 2011 and totaling \$550; two of these checks were not negotiated. The Audit staff also received copies of presumptive letters dated August 5, 2011, totaling \$21,450.

As a result of the refunds issued prior to audit notification (\$11,820), the refunds issued in response to the exit conference (\$550) and the presumptive letters sent to contributors in response to the exit conference (\$21,450), the remaining excessive contributions FOTY should address total \$61,034 (\$94,854 - \$11,820 - \$550 - \$21,450).

The Audit staff recommends that, within 30 calendar days of service of this report, FOTY provide documentation demonstrating that contributions of \$61,034 are not excessive. Absent such a demonstration, FOTY should resolve these excessive contributions by either:

- sending presumptive redesignation/retribution letters informing contributors about how the excessive portion of their contributions was resolved and offering a refund (copies of these letters and verification that the letters were sent must be provided to the Audit staff);

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<sup>4</sup> The sample error amount was projected using a Monetary Unit Sample with a 95 percent confidence level plus the result of a focused review of contributions not included in the sample population. The sample estimate could be as low as \$53,689 or as high as \$135,419.

- refunding the excessive portion of each contribution and providing evidence of such refunds (Evidence should include copies of the front and back of negotiated refund checks). If funds are not available to make the necessary refunds, FOTY should disclose the contributions requiring refund on Schedule D (Debt and Obligations) until funds become available; or
- making a payment of \$61,034 to the U.S. Treasury and providing evidence of such payment.

Should documentation be presented demonstrating that any review exception is not excessive, the Audit staff will make appropriate revisions to the excessive contribution amount.

### **Finding 3. Failure to File 48-Hour Notices**

#### **Summary**

During audit fieldwork, a review of contributions received during the 48-hour filing periods revealed that FOTY failed to file 48-hour notices for 51 contributions totaling \$75,700. Most of the unfiled notices were for general election contributions. The Audit staff recommends that FOTY provide evidence that it filed the 48-hour notices in a timely manner or submit any written comments it considers relevant.

#### **Legal Standard**

**Last-Minute Contributions (48-Hour Notice).** Campaign committees must file special notices regarding contributions of \$1,000 or more received less than 20 days but more than 48 hours before any election in which the candidate is running. This rule applies to all types of contributions to any authorized committee of the candidate, including:

- Contributions from the candidate;
- Loans from the candidate and other non-bank sources; and
- Endorsements or guarantee of loans from banks. 11 CFR §104.5(f)

#### **Facts and Analysis**

##### **A. Facts**

The Audit staff reviewed contributions of \$1,000 or more received during the 48-hour notice filing period for the primary election (04/15/2010-05/01/2010) and for the general election (10/14/2010 – 10/30/2010). FOTY failed to file 48-hour notices for 51 contributions totaling \$75,700, as summarized below.

	<b>Primary</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>48-Hour Notices Not Filed</b>	<b>\$2,500</b> (2)	<b>\$73,200</b> (49)	<b>\$75,700</b> (51)

The contributions for which 48-hour notices were not filed were from 41 individuals for \$60,200, eight political committees for \$13,500 and two LLCs for \$2,000.

**B. Interim Audit Report & Audit Division Recommendation**

This matter was discussed with FOTY representatives at the exit conference. The Audit staff provided a schedule of the contributions for which 48-hour notices were not filed. FOTY representatives did not have any comments on this matter.

The Audit staff recommends that, within 30 calendar days of service of this report, FOTY provide evidence that the 48-hour notices were timely filed or submit any additional comments it considers relevant.