

OHIO ETHICS COMMISSION
William Green Building
30 West Spring Street, L3
Columbus, Ohio 43215-2256



Telephone: (614) 466-7090
Fax: (614) 466-8368

www.ethics.ohio.gov

Press Release
November 29, 2007

JOINT PRESS RELEASE:

For more information, contact:

Franklin County Prosecuting Attorney Ron O'Brien
(614) 462-3555

or

Columbus City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr.
(614) 645-7483

or

David E. Freel, Executive Director
Ohio Ethics Commission
(614) 466-7093

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**ETHICS VIOLATIONS FILED AGAINST FORMER BOARD OF ELECTIONS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR MICHAEL HACKETT**

On Thursday, November 29, 2007, Franklin County Prosecuting Attorney Ron O'Brien and Columbus City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer Jr.'s offices filed three misdemeanor charges upon complaints signed by the Ethics Commission's Chief Investigative Attorney, Paul M. Nick, alleging violations of the state's Ethics Laws against former Franklin County Board of Elections Deputy Director Michael Hackett. The charges were filed in the Franklin County Municipal Court under case number 07 CRB 30278.

These charges result from an Ohio Ethics Commission investigation initially requested by members of the Franklin County Board of Elections (Board). Hackett was charged with having an unlawful interest in the profits or benefits of a \$785,000 contract awarded by the Board on November 23, 2005 to SST Systems LLC to provide the Board with voting machine carts to support new voting machines. Hackett was also charged with falsification for providing false information in an advisory request to the Ethics Commission sent on June 10, 2005 while Hackett was still Deputy Director, falsely representing to the

Commission that Hackett had no interest in SST Systems LLC's contract with the Board, that his wife had a one-time interest but had divested that interest, and that Hackett himself had not been part of any discussions of this contract while Deputy Director.

Hackett was also charged with a conflict of interest for violating the Revolving Door provisions of the Ethics Law by receiving \$5,056.63 from a vendor to the Board, IFES, to serve as its Franklin County-based on-site coordinator and technical support for a \$182,980 contract awarded to IFES on January 3, 2006. IFES had submitted a bid to perform this work with the Board on November 18, 2005 while Hackett remained a Deputy Director and was responsible for the general oversight of reviewing the bid by IFES.

Hackett is scheduled to be arraigned on Thursday, January 3, 2008, at the Franklin County Courthouse, 375 South High Street, Columbus, Ohio, in Courtroom 4C at 9:00 a.m. The telephone number for information at the Municipal Court Criminal Division is (614) 645-8186..

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