

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Plaskett Files F.E.C. Complaint Against Russell For Failing To File Campaign Contributions; Other Requirements

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ST. CROIX -- Ronald Russell late Monday said due to an oversight, he did not register with the Federal Election Commission campaign contributions that exceeded \$5,000. "We called the F.E.C. today and guaranteed we would file and register any reports due within 48 hours," reads a press release sent to The Consortium by Mr. Russell's campaign.

His response follows a [complaint](#) by sitting Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett, filed with the F.E.C. on Monday, that highlights multiple filing requirements that Mr. Russell,

who is competing against Ms. Plaskett for the delegate seat, had failed to comply with.

According to the complaint, Mr. Russell as of Monday:

- Had not registered as a Candidate for Federal Office with the FEC;
- Had not designated a principal campaign committee with the FEC;
- Had not designated a Treasurer for his (unregistered and, potentially, nonexistent) principal campaign committee;
- Did not file a Campaign Finance Quarterly Report due on July 15, 2016;
- Did not file a Pre-Election Campaign Finance report that was due on Monday July 25, 2016.

The complaint points out that Mr. Russell has been campaigning for months across a wide variety of media, including radio advertising, a campaign website, a campaign Facebook page, paid radio talk shows, press releases, and a YouTube channel complete with campaign video advertisements, according to a release Ms. Plaskett's office issued Monday. (Because what Ms. Plaskett's office said was an email error, the release did not arrive in The Consortium's inbox until this morning).

"Among all of the violations committed, this is the most troubling. Nobody knows where Ronnie Russell's campaign funding has come from, which is a serious violation of campaign finance laws, said Conrad E. Francois II, territorial campaign manager for Virgin Islands for Plaskett.

According to Mr. Russell's release, as of June 30, outside of Mr. Russell's personal contributions, the campaign received \$600 in contributions. "The matter has been rectified," he said.

The Plaskett campaign continued to assail Mr. Russell for the mishap, stating that while he touts his experience in the practice of law, a former four-term senator and, according to the release, a self-proclaimed former counsel of the Virgin Islands Democratic Party, the federal oversight is, at best, "a flagrant violation of federal campaign finance law and regulation."

"For someone who claims to be such an expert at the federal level, it is nothing less than shocking, that Mr. Russel would blatantly, and willfully, ignore the laws required by an individual and his campaign to be a federal candidate, therefore the complaint had to be filed and we requested that the Federal Election Commission fully investigate these actions and include a full accounting of all contributions received and expenditures made, the Voters of the Virgin Islands deserve noting less," Mr. Francois concluded.