

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rick Taylor, Dakota Communications

310 815-8444

John Schwada, MediaFix Associates

310 709-0056

john.schwada@gmail.com

**STATE OPENS PROBE OF FOREIGN MONEY GOING TO ANTI-PROP 60 CAMPAIGN
FPPC Investigates Allegations Porn Industry May Be Up to Its Old Tricks**

Los Angeles, Sept. 29, 2016 – California’s campaign finance watchdog has opened a full-scale investigation into allegations that the porn industry-funded campaign against Prop. 60 illegally accepted and failed to report \$75,000 in foreign contributions.

In a letter dated Sept. 28, the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) notified Bradley W. Hertz, attorney for complainant and public health advocate Whitney Engeran-Cordova, that it would be investigating the contributions.

“It was not a slam-dunk to get the FPPC to open an investigation,” said Hertz, who specializes in election law. “The Commission’s enforcement staff has to find that the allegations made in a sworn complaint have a high level of credibility before they will take this step.”

Earlier this month, Engeran-Cordova filed a detailed sworn complaint alleging the contributions violated laws forbidding foreign intervention in U.S. elections and were not properly disclosed to authorities and to the public. The complaint named Eric Paul Leue, the paid head of the coalition of porn companies fighting Prop. 60, as largely responsible for the violations.

Engeran-Cordova is a supporter of Prop. 60, the measure on the Nov. 8 ballot that seeks to strengthen the enforcement of an existing rule requiring porn performers to wear condoms to protect themselves, their partners and the wider community from sexually transmitted diseases.

In his sworn complaint, Engeran-Cordova alleged seven companies made seven separate contributions to the anti-Prop. 60 campaign totaling \$75,000. All of the contributions were made on Sept. 2. All the companies have ties to Global Personals, LLC, which business records show is based in the UK. All are involved in the adult entertainment industry. Six of the seven companies also failed to report their contributions in a timely manner required by law.

In a new twist on the case, allegations have also surfaced that UK-based Global Personals, LLC, shares employees with MindGeek USA, Inc., the successor to Manwin USA, Inc. Manwin was also the key figure in a prior FPPC investigation of illegal foreign intervention in a U.S. election – in this case involving a 2012 ballot measure to require condoms in porn films produced in Los Angeles County.

Mike South, a respected porn industry blogger, reported this alleged connection in a Sept. 19 posting.

“It looks like the plot is thickening,” said Hertz. “We are currently following up on this latest information. If it proves to be true, we could end up with the same cast of characters violating the law in 2016 who violated similar laws in 2012.”

In the 2012 case, the FPPC found Manwin illegally contributed more than \$268,000 to the campaign to defeat a proposed LA County condom measure (another \$75,000 was illegally contributed by another foreign porn industry company, Froytal Services Ltd).

MindGeek subsequently wrote a \$61,500 check to pay the fine – the largest FPPC fine of the year – for the violations.