

Criminal and Civil Litigation Intersect

DENVER (AP) A special prosecutor ruled Tuesday that a campaign manager for Gov. Bill Ritter violated no laws following allegations of spending violations during Ritter's 2006 campaign.

Ritter had told the Arapahoe County district attorney in April that his campaign violated finance laws when his campaign manager, Greg Kolomitz, improperly paid about \$217,000 to 28 vendors last year.

Ritter said at the time that his campaign and inaugural committee chairman also overpaid himself and his company \$83,250 out of Ritter's inaugural account.

Ritter later said more campaign violations were uncovered and that Kolomitz had written the campaign a check for \$10,340 to correct the problem.

A statement from the district attorney's office said a special prosecutor concluded there is insufficient evidence of any crime. The district attorney's office refused further comment.

Ritter issued a statement saying he considers the case closed.

We were open and transparent with the public and appropriate authorities when we discovered these problems," Ritter said. "Prior to the investigation, Mr. Kolomitz made full restitution by repaying both the inaugural and campaign accounts."

Rick Kornfeld, an attorney for Kolomitz, said the finding allows his client to clear his name.

"We knew all along that the facts did not support charges," Kornfeld said.

In a separate case involving a complaint to the secretary of state's office, an administrative law judge had ruled there were no finance violations by the Ritter Campaign Committee and the Ritter Inaugural Committee. Those allegations involved the unauthorized use of funds for campaign purposes.

Ritter said he raised about \$1.1 million for his inauguration, which included two sold-out inaugural dinners, a concert featuring country singer Jessie Colter, a train tour from Greeley to Pueblo, and a flying tour of the Western Slope. He said the expenses weren't extravagant.

The governor said his campaign committee took out a \$200,000 loan to repay the expenses, which were incorrectly paid out of his inaugural committee's bank account.

Ritter said the irregularities occurred after the election and would not have affected the outcome of his race against Republican congressman Bob Beauprez.

Ritter said he has known Kolomitz for years but that Kolomitz would have no future role in his campaigns.

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Call Us At
303.573.1900
Fax: 303.446.9400
1600 Stout Street, Suite 1000
Denver, CO 80202