In the Matter of:

Angela Alsobrooks Alsobrooks for Senate Jay Petterson, Treasurer

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## **COMPLAINT**

- Complainant brings this complaint before the Federal Election Commission ("FEC" or
  "Commission") seeking an immediate investigation and enforcement action against Prince George's
  County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, Alsobrooks for Senate, and Jay Petterson as Treasurer
  ("Committee") for violations of the Federal Election Campaign Act ("FECA" or "Act").
- 2. This complaint is filed pursuant to 52 U.S.C. § 30109(a)(1) and is based on information providing reason to believe that:
- 3. Respondents have violated 52 U.S.C. § 30125(e)(1) and 11 C.F.R. § 300.61 by using state/local campaign funds which are not subject to federal limitations, prohibitions, and reporting requirements of FECA in connection with an election for federal office.

## **STATEMENT OF THE LAW**

4. Pursuant to 52 U.S.C. § 30125(e)(1) and 11 C.F.R. § 300.61, candidates for federal office are prohibited from soliciting, receiving, directing, transferring, spending, or disbursing funds in connection with a campaign for federal office unless those funds are subject to the limitations, prohibitions, and reporting requirements of FECA.

### **STATEMENT OF FACTS**

- 5. On May 9, 2023, Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks announced her bid for Maryland's U.S. Senate seat.¹ She filed a Statement of Organization for her principal campaign committee, Alsobrooks for Senate, with the FEC on May 9, 2023.²
- 6. Ms. Alsobrooks currently maintains a Maryland state-level campaign committee called "Friends of Angela Alsobrooks." She has used this committee in her previous campaigns for State's Attorney, as well as in campaigns for her current office, Prince George's County Executive. Her current position as County Executive is term-limited and expires in December 2026.<sup>3</sup>
- 7. In her 2024 Annual Campaign Statement for her state committee which covers the 2023 calendar year Ms. Alsobrooks reported making significant disbursements beginning in June 2023 for fundraising expenses, *after* she announced her campaign for U.S. Senate. Ms. Alsobrooks' term-limited County Executive position was not on the ballot in 2023, and Ms. Alsobrooks has not announced any campaign for another Maryland state or local office.<sup>4</sup>
- 8. These state-level "fundraising expenses" disbursements were made to Rice Consulting, a company that bills itself as "Maryland's Top Fundraising Firm for Democrats and Organizations."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Brian Witte, Top Maryland County Leader Alsobrooks Running for US Senate, <u>Associated Press</u> (May 9, 2023).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Alsobrooks for Senate, Statement of Organization (Filed May 9, 2023).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Maryland Campaign Reporting Information System, Candidate Committee Registration Information, <u>Friends of Angela Alsobrooks</u> (Accessed June 12, 2024) (Note: Showing the establishment of the Committee on Apr. 10, 2009, its use for Ms. Alsobrooks State's Attorney and County Executive campaigns, and its current listed status as "Active"); County Code of Prince George's, Maryland Section 3-307A (2019).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Maryland Campaign Reporting Information System, Candidate Committee Registration Information, <u>Friends of Angela Alsobrooks</u>, Filing Information, Election Cycle, 2023-2026, 2024 Annual (Filed Jan. 16, 2024) (Accessed June 12, 2024) (Note: Showing the establishment of the Committee on Apr. 10, 2009 its current listed status as "Active," and history of relevant disbursements).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Id.; Rice Consulting, Who We Are (Accessed June 12, 2024).

9. In total, nearly \$18,000 in disbursements to Rice Consulting appear under the "Fundraising Expenses" section of Ms. Alsobrooks' state report from June to October 2023. All of these disbursements occurred *after* she became a candidate for U.S. Senate in May 2023.<sup>6</sup>

Expenditures V - Fundraising Expenses  (see schedules 1A and 1B for other types of Income)			
06/22/2023	Check	Rice Consulting 17 West Courtland Street, Suite 210, Bel Air, Maryland 21014	\$15,397.3
06/22/2023	Check	Rice Consulting 17 West Courtland Street, Suite 210, Bel Air, Maryland 21014	\$1,163.5
06/22/2023	Check	Rice Consulting 17 West Courtland Street, Suite 210, Bel Air, Maryland 21014	\$350.00
10/02/2023	Electronic Check	Rice Consulting 17 West Courtland Street, Suite 210, Bel Air, Maryland 21014	\$925.00

- 10. Ms. Alsobrooks' state-level campaign reported raising only \$560 for all of 2023. While there is scant, if not zero evidence, of any state-level fundraising events held in 2023, publicly available information reveals that Ms. Alsobrooks held at least seven *federal* fundraising events in May and June 2023. These include an EMILYs List fundraiser in New York City that occurred before Ms. Alsobrooks filed as a federal candidate, as well as a private Georgetown gathering hosted by Washington, D.C., Mayor Muriel Bowser on June 22, 2023. On the same date, June 22, 2023 Ms. Alsobrooks' state campaign committee paid Rice Consulting nearly \$17,000 for fundraising expenses. Additionally, five more fundraisers in support of Angela Alsobrooks' U.S. Senate campaign, all occurring in June 2023, appear directly on Rice Consulting's events page.<sup>7</sup>
- 11. The only disbursements made by Ms. Alsobrooks' committees during this period that could be construed or categorized as "fundraising expenses" appear on Ms. Alsobrooks' state-level campaign committee reports. In fact, a search of the FEC database indicates that Alsobrooks for Senate did not make a single disbursement for "fundraising" until June 30, 2023, and only after hundreds of thousands of dollars had been raised in support of her U.S. Senate campaign.<sup>8</sup>

# **CAUSE OF ACTION**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Maryland Campaign Reporting Information System, Candidate Committee Registration Information, <u>Friends of Angela Alsobrooks</u>, Filing Information, Election Cycle, 2023-2026, 2024 Annual (Filed Jan. 16, 2024) (Accessed June 12, 2024); Witte, *supra* note 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Maryland Campaign Reporting Information System, Candidate Committee Registration Information, Friends of Angela Alsobrooks, Filing Information, Election Cycle, 2023-2026, 2024 Annual (Filed Jan. 16, 2024) (Accessed June 12, 2024); Exhibit A; Zachary Basu, Axios Sneak Peek: Maryland's Wide-Open Senate Race, Axios (May 1, 2023); Tom Sherwood, Shaken and Stirred: Bowser's Inner Circle Amid Falcicchio Fallout, Washington City Paper (June 26, 2023); Alsobrooks for Senate, Statement of Organization (Filed May 9, 2023); Exhibit B; Exhibit C; Exhibit D; Exhibit E; Exhibit F; Exhibit G.

<sup>8</sup> Maryland Campaign Reporting Information System, Candidate Committee Registration Information, Friends of Angela Alsobrooks, Filing Information, Election Cycle, 2023-2026, 2024 Annual (Filed Jan. 16, 2024) (Accessed June 12, 2024); Federal Election Commission, Alsobrooks for Senate, Disbursements, 2023-2024, "Fundraising" (2023-2024); "Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks Raised \$1.6 Million Last Quarter for Her Maryland Senate Bid.," Politico (June 30, 2023); Exhibit A; Exhibit B; Exhibit C; Exhibit E; Exhibit F; Exhibit G.

#### AGAINST RESPONDENTS ANGELA ALSOBROOKS AND COMMITTEE

# Prohibited Use of Nonfederal Funds in Connection with a Campaign for Federal Office in Violation of 52 U.S.C. § 30125(e)(1) and 11 C.F.R. § 300.61

- 12. After Ms. Alsobrooks filed her Statement of Organization with the FEC on May 9, 2023 and after she held multiple fundraising events in support of her candidacy for U.S. Senate her state-level campaign committee, Friends of Angela Alsobrooks, disbursed nearly \$18,000 for what appears to be fundraising expenses in support of her campaign for federal office. These substantial fundraising expenses indicate that Ms. Alsobrooks' state-level campaign committee was used illicitly to kick-start and then finance her federal campaign for U.S. Senate in its burgeoning stages. The absence of any disbursements for fundraising expenses from her federal campaign committee for nearly the first two months of that federal campaign even though it reported raising substantial sums further strengthens the possibility of this financial malfeasance, and is strong evidence of the impermissible use of nonfederal funds.
- 13. By using her state campaign committee Friends of Angela Alsobrooks for the purpose of making expenditures in support of her federal campaign for U.S. Senate, Angela Alsobrooks, Alsobrooks for Senate, and Jay Petterson in his capacity as Treasurer evaded the limitations, prohibitions, and reporting requirements of FECA in violation of 52 U.S.C. § 30125(e)(1) and 11 C.F.R. § 300.61.

# **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

14. Wherefore, the Commission should find reason to believe that Angela Alsobrooks, Alsobrooks for Senate, and Jay Petterson – in his capacity as Treasurer – violated 52 U.S.C. § 30125(e)(1) and 11 C.F.R. § 300.61 and conduct an immediate investigation under 52 U.S.C. § 30109(a)(2). The Commission should determine and impose appropriate sanctions for any and all violations. Furthermore, the Commission should enjoin respondents from any future violations, and impose any necessary and appropriate remedies to ensure respondents' future compliance with FECA.

Respectfully Submitted	Respectfully Submitted,

June 12, 2024

Caitlin Sutherland, Executive Director Americans for Public Trust 107 South West Street, Suite 442 Alexandria, VA 22314

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Supra, note 2; Exhibit A; Exhibit B; Exhibit D; Exhibit D; Exhibit E; Exhibit E; Exhibit E; Exhibit G; Maryland Campaign Reporting Information System, Candidate Committee Registration Information, Friends of Angela Alsobrooks, Filing Information, Election Cycle, 2023-2026, 2024 Annual (Filed Jan. 16, 2024) (Accessed June 12, 2024).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Federal Election Commission, Alsobrooks for Senate, Disbursements, 2023-2024, "Fundraising" (2023-2024).

# VERIFICATION

15. The complainants listed below hereby verifupon their information and belief, true.	fy that the statements made in the attached Complaint are,
For Com	nplainant "Americans for Public Trust"
	Caitlin Sutherland
City of Alexandria Commonwealth of Virginia	
The foregoing instrument was subscribed and swor Sutherland.	en to before me this 12th day of June 2024 by Caitlin
Notary Public	
Notary registration number:	
My commission expires:	

# EXHIBIT A



angela Alsobrooks is doing fundraiser in NYC w Emily's List

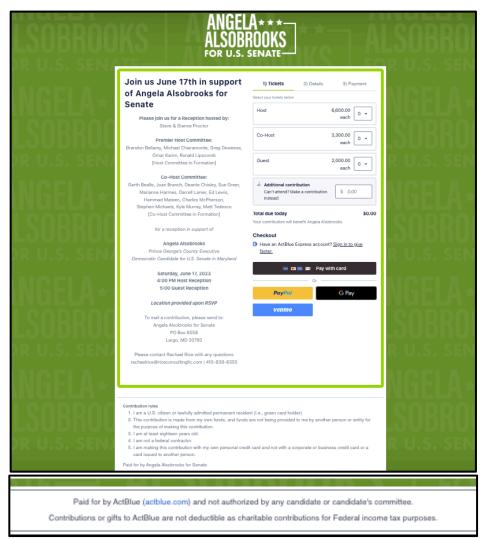
6:28 PM · May 1, 2023 · 129 Views

Judith Gelman, Twitter (May 1, 2023)



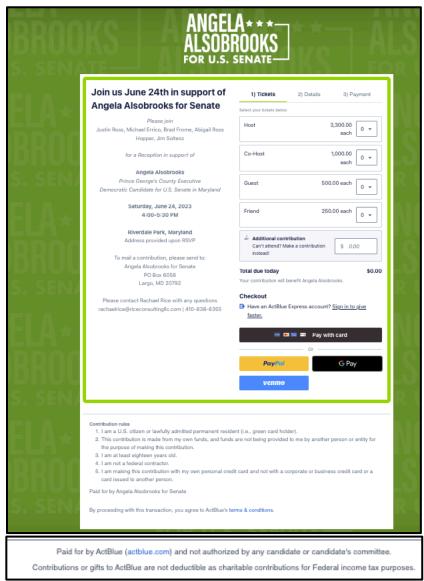
Tom Sherwood, Twitter (June 23, 2023)

#### EXHIBIT B



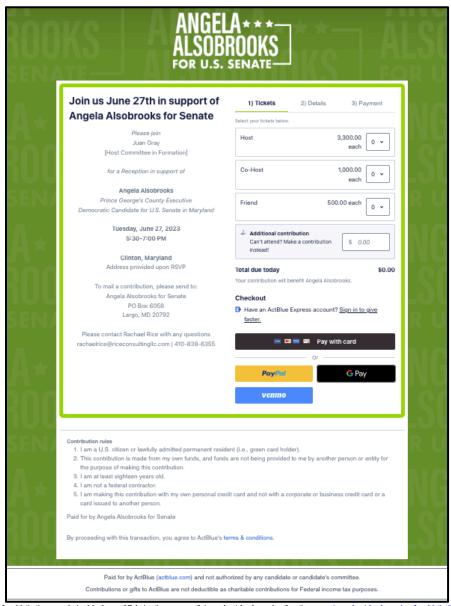
Angela Alsobrooks for U.S. Senate, Join Us June 17th in Support of Angela Alsobrooks for Senate, <u>Angela Alsobrooks for U.S. Senate-ActBlue</u> (June 17, 2023)

# EXHIBIT C



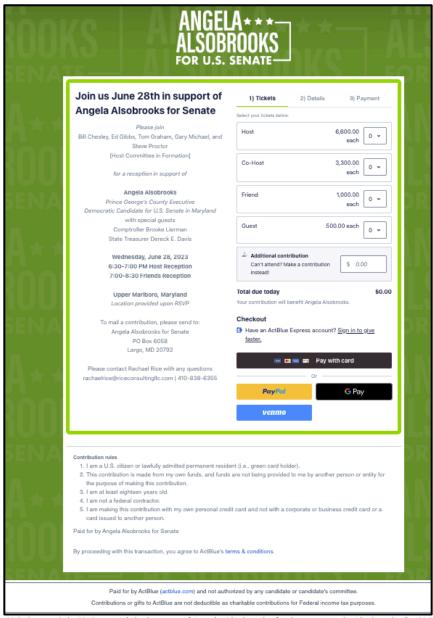
Angela Alsobrooks for U.S. Senate, Join Us June 24th in Support of Angela Alsobrooks for Senate, <u>Angela Alsobrooks for U.S. Senate-ActBlue</u> (June 24, 2023)

# EXHIBIT D



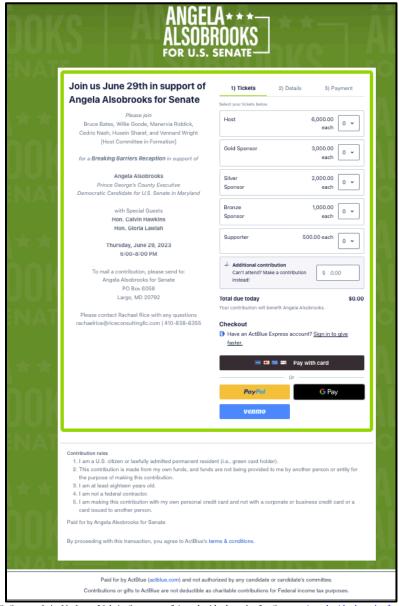
Angela Alsobrooks for U.S. Senate, Join Us June 27th in Support of Angela Alsobrooks for Senate, <u>Angela Alsobrooks for U.S. Senate-ActBlue</u> (June 27, 2023)

# EXHIBIT E



Angela Alsobrooks for U.S. Senate, Join Us June 28th in Support of Angela Alsobrooks for Senate, <u>Angela Alsobrooks for U.S. Senate-ActBlue</u> (June 28, 2023)

# EXHIBIT F



Angela Alsobrooks for U.S. Senate, Join Us June 29th in Support of Angela Alsobrooks for Senate, <u>Angela Alsobrooks for U.S. Senate-ActBlue</u> (June 29, 2023)

#### EXHIBIT G

Please join us for a Reception hosted by Steve & Diane Proctor in support of Angela Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Executive & Democratic Candidate for U.S. Senate in Maryland

Saturday, June 17, 2023 4:00 PM Host Reception | 5:00 PM Guest Reception

Address provided upon RSVP

Click here for more information and to RSVP

Please join us for a Reception hosted by Justin Ross in support of Angela Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Executive & Democratic Candidate for U.S. Senate in Maryland

Saturday, June 24, 2023 4:00 - 5:30 PM

Address provided upon RSVP

Click here for more information and to RSVP

Please join us for a Reception in support of Angela Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Executive & Democratic Candidate for U.S. Senate in Maryland

Tuesday, June 27, 2023 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Address provided upon RSVP

Click here for more information and to RSVP

Please join us for a Reception hosted by Tom Graham in support of Angela Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Executive & Democratic Candidate for U.S. Senate in Maryland

Wednesday, June 28, 2023 6:30 - 7:00 PM Host Reception | 7:00 - 8:30 PM Friends Reception

Address provided upon RSVP

Click here for more information and to RSVP

Please join us for a Reception hosted by Manervia Riddick in support of Angela Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Executive & Democratic Candidate for U.S. Senate in Maryland

Thursday, June 29, 2023 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Copper Canyon Grill Woodmore Town Center, 9300 Taj Ln Glenarden, MD 20706

Click here for more information and to RSVP

Rice Consulting, Please Join Us for A Reception Hosted by Steve & Diane Proctor in Support of Angela Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Executive & Democratic Candidate for U.S. Senate in Maryland, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (June 17, 2023; Archived June 9, 2023); Rice Consulting, Please Join Us for A Reception Hosted by Justin Ross in Support of Angela Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Executive & Democratic Candidate for U.S. Senate in Maryland, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (June 24, 2023; Archived June 9, 2023); Rice Consulting, Please Join Us for A Reception in Support of Angela Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Executive & Democratic Candidate for U.S. Senate in Maryland, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (June 27, 2023; Archived June 9, 2023); Rice Consulting, Please Join Us for A Reception Hosted by Tom Graham in Support of Angela Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Executive & Democratic Candidate for U.S. Senate in Maryland, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (June 28, 2023; Archived June 9, 2023); Rice Consulting, Please Join Us for A Reception Hosted By Manervia Riddick in Support of Angela Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Executive & Democratic Candidate for U.S. Senate in Maryland, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (June 29, 2023; Archived June 9, 2023; Archived June 9, 2023)