# File a Formal Complaint - Austin Morrison

**Austin Morrison** reported a day ago (Sun, 5 Jun at 11:41 PM) via Portal Meta

Tina Podlodowski is a candidate for Secretary of State of Washington. On March 16, 2016, she held a campaign kickoff event in the Paramount Theatre in downtown Seattle. The Paramount is owned by Seattle Theatre Group, a 501(c)3 nonprofit. Ms. Podlodowski sits on the board of Seattle Theatre Group. Prior to the event, Seattle Theatre Group's website and billboard advertised the campaign event.

In her March PDC filing, Ms. Podlodowski listed a $1,900 in-kind donation of "Event Space for Kickoff" from Seattle Theatre Group.

Nowhere in her PDC filings does Ms. Podlodowski account for the several days of advertising that the Paramount Theatre supplied her campaign with. The attached photos of emails and social media posts from her campaign show that the billboard advertised her campaign for at least two and a half days, possibly longer.

Seattle Theatre Group has stonewalled in response to multiple requests that they estimate the cost of a similar rental of their event space. It appears that Seattle Theatre Group is concealing the actual cost of their event space, and that Ms. Podlodowski's campaign likely paid below fair market rates for the space (and nothing for the advertising). This would be in violation of WAC 390-16-207 and WAC 390-05-235's guidelines for valuation of an in-kind contribution.

$1,900 is the previous statutory maximum for an in-kind gift for a single election, until recently when it was adjusted upwards by WAC 390-05-400. It seems possible that, being unfamiliar with campaign finance laws (as a non-profit, it is illegal under federal law for them to contribute to campaigns, including through in-kind gifts), Seattle Theatre Group simply recorded what they believed to be the maximum legal contribution to Ms. Podlodowski's campaign. It seems exceedingly unlikely that the cost for the event space coincidentally happened to be equal to what had been the statutory maximum donation a short time prior to the event.

I request that the Public Disclosure Commission a) investigate and attempt to determine fair market value of the event space, b) investigate whether Ms. Podlodowski's campaign failed to record an in-kind donation or expenditure of the advertising space, and c), if necessary, require appropriate payments or fines from Ms. Podlodowski's campaign.