

BEFORE THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

CAMPAIGN LEGAL CENTER
1101 14th Street NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005

v.

REP. MIKE JOHNSON
5029 Willow Chase Dr.
Benton, LA 71006-9331

MUR No. _____

MIKE JOHNSON FOR LOUISIANA
and LISA LISKER in her official capacity
as treasurer
228 S. Washington St., Ste. 115
Alexandria, VA 22314

COMPLAINT

1. Rep. Mike Johnson, the current Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, and his campaign committee, Mike Johnson for Louisiana (the “campaign”), appear to have used campaign funds to rent Johnson a personal residence, a clear-cut violation of federal campaign finance laws that prohibit using campaign funds to pay for personal expenses. By using his donors’ funds to pay the rent on his residence in Washington, DC, Johnson and his campaign appear to have violated the Federal Election Campaign Act’s (“FECA”) core prohibition against converting campaign funds to personal use, an abuse of public trust that undermines voters’ confidence in elected officials and the democratic process.
2. This complaint is filed pursuant to 52 U.S.C. § 30109(a)(1) and is based on information and belief that Johnson and his campaign committee violated FECA, 52 U.S.C. § 30101, *et seq.* “If the Commission, upon receiving a complaint . . . has reason to believe that a person has committed, or is about to commit, a violation of [FECA] . . . [t]he Commission *shall make an investigation* of such alleged violation.”¹

¹ 52 U.S.C. § 30109(a)(2) (emphasis added); *see also* 11 C.F.R. § 111.4(a).

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

3. Johnson has represented Louisiana’s 4th congressional district since 2017 and has served as Speaker of the House since October 2023.² His principal authorized campaign committee is Mike Johnson for Louisiana, and the campaign’s treasurer is Lisa Lisker.³
4. Since March 2025, Johnson’s campaign committee has reported making five disbursements totaling \$12,500 to pay rent for a home where Johnson lives in Washington, DC.⁴
5. In February 2025, news reporting indicated that Johnson was living in the home of a major political donor.⁵ Johnson’s campaign confirmed that Johnson lived in the donor’s home and stated that he paid “fair market value in monthly rent for the portion of the Washington, D.C. townhome that he occupie[d].”⁶
6. In March 2025, in the wake of this revelation, Johnson reportedly moved to a house owned by Rep. Darrell Issa.⁷ Johnson’s campaign and Issa both publicly confirmed the arrangement—with Issa stating “He’s a friend and needed a place”—and the campaign asserted that Johnson would be paying a “fair market price for the lease of the property.”⁸

² See Press Release, *Congressman Mike Johnson Elected Speaker of the House* (Oct. 25, 2023), <https://www.house.gov/feature-stories/2023-10-25-new-speaker-of-the-house>.

³ Mike Johnson for Louisiana, Amend. Statement of Org. at 1 (Feb. 7, 2024), <https://docquery.fec.gov/pdf/100/202402079619686100/202402079619686100.pdf>.

⁴ Mike Johnson for Louisiana, Disbursements to “Greene Properties” Described as “Rent,” https://www.fec.gov/data/disbursements/?data_type=processed&committee_id=C00608695&recipient_name=GREENE+PROPERTIES&disbursement_description=rent.

⁵ Joshua Kaplan, *et al.*, *Speaker Mike Johnson Is Living in a D.C. House That Is the Center of a Pastor’s Secretive Influence Campaign*, ProPublica (Feb. 28, 2025), <https://www.propublica.org/article/mike-johnson-evangelical-pastor-steve-berger-roommates> (characterizing Johnson’s living arrangement as “a remarkable coup for a political influence project that has until now managed to avoid public scrutiny”).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Kadia Goba, *House Speaker Mike Johnson rents house from colleague*, Semafor (Apr. 30, 2025), <https://www.semafor.com/article/04/30/2025/house-speaker-mike-johnson-rents-house-from-colleague>.

⁸ *Id.*

7. Since March 2025, Johnson’s principal authorized campaign committee has reported making five \$2,500 disbursements —\$12,500 in total, to date—for “Rent” to Greene Properties, Inc., located in Vista, CA.⁹
8. According to Issa’s 2023 personal financial disclosure report, Greene Properties is Issa’s wholly owned company.¹⁰ In addition, Issa for Congress, which previously served as Issa’s principal authorized campaign committee, has reported making payments to Greene Properties for “Office Utilities.”¹¹ No other federal candidate or committee has ever reported making payments to Greene Properties.¹²
9. Since Johnson entered Congress in 2017, his campaign has only reported two other payments that appear to be “rent” of physical space—a \$950 payment in 2018 and a \$2,217 payment in 2020—and only one of these payments was described as “office rent.”¹³ Both of these payments were disbursed to Shreveport, Louisiana-based “Beene Office Park, LLC.”¹⁴ There is, accordingly, no indication in the Johnson campaign committee’s disclosure reports that Johnson’s campaign has ever rented campaign office space in the Washington, DC area.

⁹ Disbursements to “Greene Properties” for “Rent,” *supra* note 4.

¹⁰ Annual Report of Hon. Darrell E Issa, Schedule A, https://disclosures-clerk.house.gov/public_disc/financial-pdfs/2023/10060532.pdf.

¹¹ Issa for Congress, All Disbursements to “Greene Properties,” https://www.fec.gov/data/disbursements/?data_type=processed&committee_id=C00350520&recipient_name=GREENE+PROPERTIES.

¹² All Disbursements to “Greene Properties,” https://www.fec.gov/data/disbursements/?data_type=processed&recipient_name=GREENE+PROPERTIES.

¹³ Mike Johnson for Louisiana, All Disbursements for “Rent,” https://www.fec.gov/data/disbursements/?data_type=processed&committee_id=C00608695&disbursement_description=rent.

¹⁴ Mike Johnson for Louisiana, Disbursements to “beene office park” for “rent” https://www.fec.gov/data/disbursements/?data_type=processed&committee_id=C00608695&recipient_name=beene+office+park&disbursement_description=rent.

SUMMARY OF THE LAW

Personal Use

10. Under FECA, a “contribution accepted by a candidate, and any other donation received” to support a federal officeholder’s official duties, “shall not be converted by any person to personal use.”¹⁵ Any such contribution or donation is converted to personal use if it “is used to fulfill any commitment, obligation, or expense of a person that would exist irrespective of the candidate’s election campaign or individual’s duties as a holder of Federal office.”¹⁶
11. Commission regulations set forth certain categories of expenses which, when paid with campaign funds, constitute *per se* personal use—including, *e.g.*, “[m]ortgage, rent or utility payments . . . [f]or any part of any personal residence of the candidate or a member of the candidate’s family.”¹⁷
12. For all other expenses, including legal, travel, and meal expenses, the “Commission will determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether” the use of campaign funds “would exist irrespective of the candidate’s campaign or duties as a Federal officeholder, and therefore [constitute] personal use.”¹⁸

¹⁵ 52 U.S.C. § 30114(a), (b)(1); *see* 11 C.F.R. § 113.1(g) (explaining that “[p]ersonal use means any use of funds in a campaign account of a present or former candidate to fulfill a commitment, obligation or expense of any person that would exist irrespective of the candidate’s campaign or duties as a Federal officeholder.”).

¹⁶ 52 U.S.C. § 30114(b)(2).

¹⁷ 11 C.F.R. § 113.1 (g)(1)(i)(E)(1).

¹⁸ *Id.* § 113.1(g)(1)(ii).

CAUSE OF ACTION

COUNT I:

MIKE JOHNSON AND MIKE JOHNSON FOR LOUISIANA APPEAR TO HAVE VIOLATED 52 U.S.C. § 30114 BY CONVERTING CAMPAIGN FUNDS TO PERSONAL USE

13. The overall record indicates that Johnson and his campaign violated FECA by converting campaign funds to personal use. Reporting indicates, and both Issa and Johnson’s campaign have confirmed, that Johnson began renting a personal residence from Issa in March 2025,¹⁹ following a period during which Johnson had reportedly been living in a major donor’s home.²⁰ Johnson acknowledged renting a home from Issa—who commented that Johnson is a “friend” who “needed a place.”²¹ These facts indicate that in March 2025, Johnson began living in a residence he rented from Issa.
14. These developments in March 2025 coincided precisely with the first of five \$2,500 payments made by Johnson’s campaign to Greene Properties, a company that Issa wholly owns.²² Johnson’s campaign subsequently made four additional, identical payments, each at the end of the month, to Greene Properties.²³
15. Viewed as a whole, these facts support finding reason to believe that Johnson’s campaign has paid \$12,500—and is likely continuing to pay \$2,500 per month—to rent Johnson a personal residence in Washington, DC.²⁴ This personal use of campaign funds to pay for residential rental expenses is explicitly prohibited by FECA and Commission regulations.

¹⁹ See Goba, *supra* note 7.

²⁰ See Kaplan, *supra* note 5.

²¹ See Goba, *supra* note 7.

²² See *supra* notes 9-10.

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ Additional rent payments beyond June 30, 2025, have not yet been reported but would appear on Johnson’s next quarterly campaign finance disclosure report, which is due in October 2025.

16. Indeed, using campaign funds to make “[m]ortgage, rent or utility payments . . . [f]or any part of any personal residence” used by a candidate or their family member constitutes *per se* personal use.²⁵
17. In addition, to the extent that Johnson and his campaign now contend that these payments were wholly or partly for campaign purposes—*e.g.*, a campaign office—that contention not only appears inconsistent with Issa’s reported statement about helping his “friend” who “needed a place;”²⁶ it is also not credible that Johnson’s campaign, which had never previously rented office space in Washington, DC, would begin renting such space *at precisely the same time* that Johnson reportedly began renting a residence from Issa.²⁷ The vastly more credible explanation is that Johnson’s campaign is paying to rent a personal residence for Johnson.
18. The Commission has made clear, moreover, that using “campaign funds for mortgage, rent or utility payments on *any part* of a personal residence of the candidate or a member of the candidate’s family is personal use, even if part of the personal residence is being used in the campaign.”²⁸ As such, under FEC rules, Johnson’s campaign cannot pay to rent Johnson a personal residence even if part of that residence is also being used for campaign purposes.

²⁵ 52 U.S.C. § 30114(b)(2)(A); 11 C.F.R. § 113.1 (g)(1)(i)(E)(1).

²⁶ Goba, *supra* note 7.

²⁷ See *supra* notes 7, 13-14.

²⁸ Personal Use of Campaign Funds, 60 Fed. Reg. 7862, 7865 (Feb. 9, 1995), <https://www.fec.gov/resources/cms-content/documents/notice1995-05-020995.pdf#page=5> (emphasis added); see Advisory Op. 1995-08 at 2 (Stupak), <https://www.fec.gov/files/legal/aos/1995-08/1995-08.pdf>. In Advisory Op. 2000-02 (Hubbard), the Commission permitted a candidate to use campaign funds “to pay rent and utility costs for the use of office space in the same rental property where the candidate personally resided in view of the “somewhat unique” circumstances: the candidate had used the property as both a law office and residence prior to becoming a candidate, the property in question was a commercial building, and campaign funds would only be used to rent the portion of the property previously used as a law office. Advisory Op. 2000-02 at 4 (Hubbard), <https://www.fec.gov/files/legal/aos/2000-02/2000-02.pdf>.

19. Accordingly, there is reason to believe Johnson and his campaign have violated and continue to violate 52 U.S.C. § 30114.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

20. Wherefore, the Commission should find reason to believe that Mike Johnson and Mike Johnson for Louisiana violated 52 U.S.C. § 30101 *et seq.*, and conduct an immediate investigation under 52 U.S.C. § 30109(a)(2).
21. Further, the Commission should seek appropriate sanctions for any and all violations, including civil penalties sufficient to deter future violations and an injunction prohibiting the respondents from any and all violations in the future, and should seek such additional remedies as are necessary and appropriate to ensure compliance with FECA.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Saurav Ghosh
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August 6, 2025

VERIFICATION

The complainants listed below hereby verify that the statements made in the attached Complaint are, upon their information and belief, true.

Sworn pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1001.

For Complainant Campaign Legal Center

Saurav Ghosh

Saurav Ghosh, Esq.

Commonwealth of Virginia

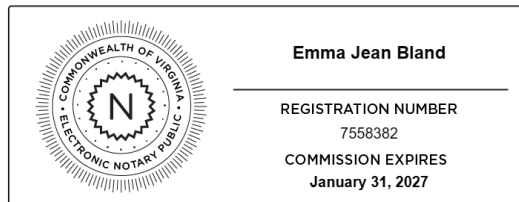
County of Prince William

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 6th day of August 2025.

Emma Jean Bland

Notary Public

Electronic Notary Public



Notarized remotely online using communication technology via Proof.