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News from the Michigan Association for Justice

Friday, July 13, 2018

Contact: Nate Pilon, 517-321-3073, npilon@michiganjustice.org

MAJ Calls For Scrutiny Of Dark Money Group And Campaign Finance Violations

Michigan Association for Justice files complaint against Detroiters for Change and candidate committees for Marshall Bullock, Terra DeFoe, and Adam Hollier

LANSING—The Michigan Association for Justice (MAJ) has filed a campaign finance complaint with the Michigan Department of State against Detroiters for Change, a 510(c)4 organization, as well as three candidate committees: Adam J. Hollier Committee, Friends to Elect Marshall Bullock, and Friends to Elect Terra DeFoe.

Detroiters for Change is using billboards in the city to promote a “driver’s choice” plan that lets automobile insurance companies sell policies with reduced levels of medical coverage. The plan weakens medical care protections for Michiganders who are injured in auto accidents *without* guaranteeing rate reductions for drivers.

“In Michigan, insurance companies charge folks who live in Detroit the highest automobile insurance rates in the country, and we are working with a number of organizations to find a solution,” said MAJ President Debra A. Freid. “Unfortunately, Detroiters for Change was apparently created to exploit this injustice and help insurance companies continue to reap excessive profits under the guise of reform.”

In its billboard advertising campaign, Detroiters for Change expressly advocates for the election of three state legislative candidates: Marshall Bullock, Terra DeFoe, and Adam Hollier. The billboards say, “We Need [candidate’s name] In Lansing!” MAJ believes this group is violating Michigan campaign finance law by failing to register as a committee (MCL 169.224) and by failing to report its expenditures (MCL 169.226). In addition, Detroiters for Change uses the wrong identifications on the billboards which lack the phrase “with regulated funds” in violation of MCL 169.247. Since the disclaimer -- “not authorized by any candidate” -- is missing, the expenditures must be in-kind contributions to Bullock, DeFoe, and Hollier, and MAJ believes that these are illegal corporate contributions under MCL 169.254.

“Who is Detroiters for Change really, and why aren’t the individuals behind this effort to reduce insurance coverage identified? Michigan campaign finance law is clear, and voters have the right to know when corporate special interest money is being used to directly elect candidates to office,” Freid said. “This appears to be a front group for the insurance industry and, no matter who is backing the group, they must be held accountable to our campaign finance laws -- otherwise, there is no transparency and voters can be duped by special interests.”

A copy of the complaint and photos of the billboards are available [here](#).

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The **Michigan Association for Justice**, formerly the Michigan Trial Lawyers Association (MTLA), is a trade association of over 1,500 plaintiff’s attorneys and staff, with offices in Lansing, Michigan.