

# TEXAS ETHICS COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF

TARAL V. PATEL,

RESPONDENT

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BEFORE THE

TEXAS ETHICS COMMISSION

SC-32409492

**RECEIVED**  
**JULY 1 2025**  
Texas Ethics Commission

## ORDER AND AGREED RESOLUTION

### I. Recitals

The Texas Ethics Commission (“TEC”) held a preliminary review hearing on June 12, 2025, to consider sworn complaint SC-32409492. The sworn complaint was filed on September 12, 2024. A quorum of the TEC was present. The TEC determined that there is credible evidence of violations of Section 255.005 of the Election Code, a law administered and enforced by the TEC. To resolve and settle this complaint without further proceedings, the TEC adopted this resolution with no civil penalty imposed.

### II. Allegation

The sworn complaint alleges that the respondent, with intent to injure a candidate or influence the result of an election, misrepresented his identity in political advertising or campaign communications, in violation of Section 255.005 of the Election Code.

### III. Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law

Credible evidence available to the TEC supports the following findings of fact and conclusions of law:

*September 18, 2022 and September 26, 2022 Antonio Scalywag social media posts:*

1. From approximately May 2022 to October 2022, the respondent served as a consultant for Fort Bend County Judge Kyle P. “KP” George’s re-election campaign.
2. On September 18, 2022, a collage of various Facebook posts opposing the judge was posted to the judge’s Facebook account. Within the collage was a xenophobic post by an individual named “Antonio Scalywag,” supporting the judge’s opponent. Additionally, on September 26, 2022, Antonio Scalywag posted a comment on the judge’s Facebook account that opposed the judge and supported the judge’s opponent.

3. Records provided by various sources, including Meta Platforms, LLC,<sup>1</sup> Google, J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, Comcast, T-Mobile, and the State of Texas, establish that the respondent created the Antonio Scalywag Facebook account and published the communications identified above. Additionally, law enforcement identified the individual pictured in the Facebook profile photograph for Antonio Scalywag. This individual confirmed that he did not write the posts at issue and that his photograph had been obtained and used without his consent.
4. Based on this information, a grand jury in Fort Bend County indicted the respondent under Section 255.005(a) of the Election Code for misrepresenting his identity in these campaign related posts, with the intent to injure a candidate or influence the result of an election. On April 15, 2025, the respondent pleaded guilty to the charge related to the September 26, 2022, Facebook post (Case No. 24-CCR-241503A). The charge related to the Facebook post included in the September 18, 2022, collage (Case No. 24-CCR-241504A) was dismissed as part of the respondent's plea agreement. Despite this dismissal, the respondent's plea in Case No. 24-CCR-241503A establishes that the respondent created the Antonio Scalywag Facebook account and, thus, published the September 18, 2022, and September 26, 2022, posts in order to influence the outcome of the election involving Judge KP George. Therefore, the respondent's plea provides credible evidence that he misrepresented his identity in the posts at issue to influence an election, in violation of Section 255.005(a) of the Election Code.

*September 18, 2022 social media post associated with Richard Meltonese:*

5. Included in the September 18, 2022, collage of Facebook posts opposing the judge's re-election was a post containing racist statements directed at the judge. The photograph associated with the Facebook profile from which the post originated matched the Facebook profile photograph for an account under the name "Richard Meltonese." Records from Meta and Google link this account to the respondent's phone and show that the account was registered from an IP address in the Washington D.C. area during the time that the respondent lived there. Based on these facts, there is credible evidence that the respondent misrepresented his identity in the communication at issue with the intent to influence the result of the election involving Judge KP George by publishing the post at issue and then including it in the September 18, 2022 post, in violation of Section 255.005 of the Election Code.

*September 18, 2023 Antonio Scalywag social media posts:*

6. In May of 2023, the respondent announced his candidacy for Fort Bend County Commissioner, Precinct 3, in the March 5, 2024, primary election. In connection with this campaign, the respondent posted a press release to his campaign Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts on September 18, 2023. Similar to the September 18, 2022, post on Judge KP George's Facebook webpage, this press release portrayed a collage of various Facebook posts that opposed the respondent's candidacy and contained racist statements directed at the respondent. Three of these posts were from the Facebook account of Antonio Scalywag created by the respondent.

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<sup>1</sup> Meta Platforms, LLC, is Facebook's parent company.

7. Based on these facts, a grand jury in Fort Bend County indicted the respondent under Section 255.005(a) of the Election Code for misrepresenting his identity in these campaign related posts, with the intent to injure a candidate or influence the result of an election. On April 15, 2025, the respondent pleaded guilty to this charge (Case No. 24-CCR-240238A), providing credible evidence that the respondent misrepresented his identity as Antonio Scalywag with the intent to influence the result of the March 5, 2024, election by publishing the posts at issue and then including them in the September 18, 2023, press release, in violation of Section 255.005(a) of the Election Code.

*September 18, 2023 Paul Rosenstein social media post:*

8. Included in the September 18, 2023, collage of Facebook posts opposing the respondent was a racist post from the Facebook account of “Paul Rosenstein.” Records from Meta and Google link this account to the respondent’s phone and show that the account was accessed from an IP address associated with the address listed on the respondent’s driver’s license. Based on these facts, a grand jury in Fort Bend County indicted the respondent under Section 255.005(a) of the Election Code. On April 15, 2025, the respondent pleaded guilty to this charge (Case No. 24-CCR-240238A), providing credible evidence that the respondent misrepresented his identity as Paul Rosenstein with the intent to influence the result of the March 5, 2024, election by publishing the posts at issue and then including them in the September 18, 2023, press release, in violation of Section 255.005(a) of the Election Code.

*September 18, 2023 Jennifer Tremaine social media post:*

9. Included in the September 18, 2023, collage of Facebook posts opposing the respondent was a racist post from the Facebook account of “Jennifer Tremaine.” Records from Meta and Google link this account to the respondent’s phone and show that the account was accessed from an IP address associated with the address listed on the respondent’s driver’s license. Based on these facts, a grand jury in Fort Bend County indicted the respondent under Section 255.005(a) of the Election Code. On April 15, 2025, the respondent pleaded guilty to this charge (Case No. 24-CCR-240238A), providing credible evidence that the respondent misrepresented his identity as Jennifer Tremaine with the intent to influence the result of the March 5, 2024, election by publishing the posts at issue and then including them in the September 18, 2023, press release, in violation of Section 255.005(a) of the Election Code.

*September 18, 2023 Jane Donnie social media post:*

10. Included in the September 18, 2023, collage of Facebook posts opposing the respondent was a post containing a racist statement from the Facebook account of “Jane Donnie.” Records from Meta and Google link this account to the respondent’s phone, credit card, and other email accounts, including the one used to create the Antonio Scalywag Facebook account. Additionally, law enforcement identified the individual pictured in the Facebook profile photograph for Jane Donnie. This individual confirmed that he did not write the posts at issue and that his photograph had been obtained and used without his consent.

Based on these facts, a grand jury in Fort Bend County indicted the respondent under Section 255.005(a) of the Election Code. On April 15, 2025, the respondent pleaded guilty to this charge (Case No. 24-CCR-240238A), providing credible evidence that the respondent misrepresented his identity as Jane Donnie with the intent to influence the result of the March 5, 2024, election by publishing the posts at issue and then including them in the September 18, 2023, press release, in violation of Section 255.005(a) of the Election Code.

#### **IV. Representations and Agreement by Respondent**

1. The respondent neither admits nor denies the findings of fact and conclusions of law described under Section III, and consents to the entry of this order and agreed resolution solely for the purpose of resolving and settling the sworn complaint.
2. The respondent consents to this order and agreed resolution and waives any right to further proceedings in this matter.
3. The respondent acknowledges that a person commits an offense if, with intent to injure a candidate or influence the result of an election, the person misrepresents the person's identity or, if acting or purporting to act as an agent, misrepresents the identity of the agent's principal, in political advertising or a campaign communication.
4. The respondent agrees to fully and strictly comply with the above requirement of law.

#### **V. Confidentiality**

This order and agreed resolution describes violations that the TEC has determined are neither technical nor de minimis. Accordingly, this order and agreed resolution is not confidential under Section 571.140 of the Government Code and may be disclosed by members and staff of the TEC.

#### **VI. Sanction**

On September 11, 2024, the Fort Bend County District Attorney filed sworn complaint SC-32409492 alleging the violations of Section 255.005(a) of the Election Code described above. The complaint followed the respondent's criminal indictment on September 3, 2024, which alleged the same violations. On April 15, 2025, the respondent pleaded guilty to the misdemeanor charges that he violated Section 255.005(a) of the Election Code in connection with the September 26, 2022, Antonio Scalywag Facebook post and the September 18, 2023 Facebook post. The respondent was then sentenced to 24 months' probation, 200 hours of community service, and other conditions. Based on the sentence related to the respondent's plea, the TEC enforcement staff received a letter from the District Attorney's Office stating that it did not wish to pursue any additional remedies related to the complaint. Therefore, the TEC assesses no civil penalty with regard to this order and agreed resolution.

**VII. Order**

The TEC hereby orders that if the respondent consents to this order and agreed resolution, it is a final and complete resolution of SC-32409492.

AGREED to by the respondent on this 1 day of July, 2025.

Taral Patel  
Taral V. Patel, Respondent

EXECUTED by the Texas Ethics Commission on: 7-1-2025.

Texas Ethics Commission  
By:   
James Tinley, Executive Director