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March 19, 2020

BY EMAIL

Ms. Lisa J. Stevenson
Acting General Counsel
Federal Election Commission
1050 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20463

Re: MUR 7683 - Response of Senator Bernard Sanders

Dear Ms. Stevenson:

This response is submitted on behalf of Senator Bernard Sanders in response to the Commission's letter dated January 27, 2020, notifying Senator Sanders of a complaint filed jointly by Common Cause and Mr. Paul S. Ryan,¹ designated by the Commission as MUR 7683 (the "Complaint").²

The Complaint, which was filed only against Our Revolution (an independent IRS Section 501(c)(4) nonprofit social welfare organization), alleges that Our Revolution is subject to the so-called "soft money" restrictions of 52 U.S.C. 30125(e)(1)(A) because, according to Common Cause and Mr. Ryan, the organization was *established* by Senator Sanders.

Common Cause and Mr. Ryan are wrong – Our Revolution was not established by Senator Sanders. Although, undoubtedly, Our Revolution was "*inspired*" by Bernie Sanders and his historic presidential campaign,"³ Senator Sanders made it clear during the organization's

¹ According to Common Cause's website, Mr. Ryan serves as its Vice President of Policy and Litigation. <https://www.commoncause.org/people/paul-s-ryan/>.

² This response is filed timely pursuant to an extension granted by Commission staff.

³ Press Release, "Founding Statement of Our Revolution Board of Directors," Jan. 11, 2017, available in Complaint Appendix (emphasis added).

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August 24, 2016, official launch event that Our Revolution is “a new independent nonprofit organization . . . inspired by the historic Bernie 2016 presidential campaign” and the Senator explicitly stated that he would not be “directing or controlling” the organization.⁴ The Senator’s statement was accurate when he made it on August 24, 2016, and has remained accurate ever since.⁵

Accordingly, pursuant to 52 U.S.C. § 30109, this matter should be dismissed.⁶

Respectfully Submitted,

Brad Deutsch

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Counsel to Senator Bernard Sanders

⁴ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kp4tFcwkjhQ>.

⁵ Moreover, the Senator has not, and does not, *finance, maintain or control* Our Revolution and has not been otherwise materially involved with Our Revolution other than an occasional show of support that is no different from support that the Senator expresses for other progressive organizations.

⁶ It should be noted, however, that even if the “soft money” allegations raised by Common Cause and Mr. Ryan had any merit whatsoever, any potential violation would be by Our Revolution, not Senator Sanders.