



COMMISSIONER ELLEN L. WEINTRAUB

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20463

**Statement of Commissioner Ellen L. Weintraub
On the Senate's Votes to Restore the Federal Election Commission to Full Strength
December 9, 2020**

Today, the Senate voted to confirm the nominations of three new commissioners, moving toward restoring the Federal Election Commission to full strength. I warmly welcome Sean Cooksey and Allen Dickerson to the Commission and look forward to a cordial and productive working relationship. I am especially pleased to welcome to the table my longtime friend and colleague Shana Broussard. Shana's vast knowledge of campaign finance law and Commission operations will enable her to hit the ground running like few commissioners before her. Her judgment and integrity will be an asset to the entire Commission. And her pathbreaking appointment, as the first Black commissioner, is a long-overdue step in making the Commission more representative of the diverse nation we serve.

There is much work to be done. The FEC has not had a full complement of commissioners since March 1, 2017. We have had enough commissioners to vote on enforcement matters for only 28 days since September 2019. Including matters scheduled to come before the Commission next week:

- We have **446** matters before the agency, counting everything in the hands of the Office of General Counsel (OGC) and everything awaiting some action by the Commission itself.
- **275** staff reports sit on commissioners' desks right now awaiting decisions from us.
- **113** of those 275 reports carry at least one recommendation from OGC that the Commission find reason to believe (RTB) that the law may have been violated.
- **35** of those 113 reports that have at least one RTB recommendation are within 18 months of falling outside the Commission's 5-year statute of limitations to pursue matters (that is, they are considered "SOL-imperiled").
- **21** of the 275 are foreign-national matters.

As I said back in June, when we briefly regained enough commissioners to vote on enforcement matters, the 275 figure is not the number to focus on. That includes many straightforward and uncontroversial items. We should be able to dramatically decrease that overall number in short order.

The Commission absolutely should move to dismiss less-significant cases, issue administrative fines, and approve Alternative Dispute Resolution agreements. But we should resist the temptation to pick only the low-hanging fruit in our backlog. The real mark of our progress will be not how many less-significant matters we dismiss, but how many quite significant matters we address. It will be how efficiently we proceed, particularly on matters imperiled by the statute of limitations. I look forward to working with all of my colleagues to get this important work done for the country.