

The Committee to Keep Doves Protected

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“No on Proposal 3” Campaign Announces Further Legal Action against Dove Shooting Proponents’ Illegal Fundraising

*Attorney General Cox Stopped Illegal Lottery, Now The Committee to Keep
Doves Protected Asks Secretary of State to Stop Money Laundering*

(Lansing) — The Committee to Keep Doves Protected, the official ballot committee for the “No” on Proposal 3 campaign, today announced it has filed a complaint with Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land against the “Citizens for Wildlife Conservation Committee (CWCC),” the ballot committee attempting to create a new dove shooting season in Michigan. The complaint charges that there is reason to believe that CWCC is accepting laundered money, raised from an illegal lottery dove shooting proponents organized earlier this year, and calls on the Secretary of State to investigate and prohibit the acceptance and spending of any laundered money.

“First illegal gambling, now money laundering—proponents of dove shooting will stop at nothing in their attempt to end Michigan’s 100-year tradition of protecting doves,” said Julie Baker, Director of the Committee to Keep Doves Protected. “Attorney General Mike Cox has declared the dove shooting proponents’ lottery illegal. Now we request that Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land enforce Michigan’s campaign finance law by prohibiting the CWCC from taking and spending this laundered, illegal gambling money.”

In June, the Committee to Keep Doves Protected filed a complaint with the Attorney General’s office against “Citizens for Wildlife Conservation (CWC),” a non-profit organization organized by proponents of a new dove shooting season, for an illegal fundraising lottery the CWC was running. After two months, during which the CWC continued its illegal fundraising, Cox declared the lottery illegal and asked the group to end the raffle. However, he did not require that all illegal money raised by the campaign be returned to ticket purchasers. Further, it took Cox two months to shut down the lottery, as opposed to his usual quick crackdown on illegal gambling, with the CWC raising money illegally throughout that time.

Now, the Citizens for Wildlife Conservation, in an attempt to skirt campaign finance laws and in order to spend the money raised from their illegal gambling scheme, are moving their money into the “Citizens for

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Wildlife Conservation Committee (CWCC),” a ballot committee of a nearly identical name created by the same proponents of a dove shooting season that created the CWC. As it is a violation of the Michigan Campaign Finance Act to accept and spend money laundered through another organization in this way, and it is the Secretary of State’s duty to enforce the Act, the Committee to Keep Doves Protected has filed a complaint with the Secretary of State, asking for an investigation into the CWCC’s practices. Moreover, no money raised through gambling can be used in ballot campaigns.

“We are filing a complaint asking Secretary of State Land to enforce the Campaign Finance Act, investigate the CWCC’s acceptance of laundered money, and prohibit the acceptance and spending of the laundered money,” said Mike Hodge, attorney for the Committee to Keep Doves Protected.

“Laws are meaningless without enforcement,” said Baker. “Dove shooting proponents have been caught breaking the law through their illegal lottery, and they should not be allowed to launder, keep and spend this money on an election campaign. If the law is not enforced, the message sent is that Michigan ballot committees or candidates can raise money illegally and can still use that money as a blank check to fund their election campaigns.”

Newspaper editorials have echoed Ms. Baker’s sentiments. *The Oakland Press* editorialized on Cox’s lax enforcement, saying that the action Cox “finally imposed was much less a crackdown than a wink and slap on the wrist.” *The South Bend Tribune* said that the CWC’s “shenanigans...need to be addressed thoroughly and quickly.... There is something very wrong when it is possible to break the law, get caught and...get away with it.”

Baker said that if the Secretary of State chose not to uphold Michigan’s law, The Committee to Keep Doves Protected would seek other avenues of enforcement, including filing criminal charges against CWC officials. Baker said that while ensuring enforcement of the law was a top priority for the Committee, the dove shooting proponents’ illegal activity was just one of the many reasons Michigan citizens should vote “No” on Proposal 3.

“There’s just no good reason to shoot doves,” said Baker. “Shooting mourning doves, Michigan’s Official Bird of Peace, does not reflect Michigan’s values. We encourage Michigan voters to say ‘No’ to Proposal 3, as doves are not overpopulated, pose no danger to people or property, and are shot for target practice, not for food.”

The Committee to Keep Doves Protected has only one goal—to keep Michigan’s 100-year tradition of protecting mourning doves, Michigan’s Official Bird of Peace. The Committee to Keep Doves Protected respects Michigan’s hunting heritage and represents a broad-based grassroots coalition of agricultural, conservation, humane, faith-based and community organizations and thousands of Michigan citizens who want to continue the protection of mourning doves as a traditional backyard songbird.

There’s **NO** good reason to shoot mourning doves:

- Doves are **NOT** overpopulated.
- Doves are **NOT** harmful to humans, property or crops.
- Doves are **NOT** shot for food, as they have little meat on their tiny bodies.
- Shooting doves amounts to **NOTHING** more than live target practice.
- There are already 40 game bird species in Michigan and there’s **NO** reason to add doves.
- Michigan traditionally protected mourning doves since 1905, and there’s **NO** reason to change that now.

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