

## **Opponents of Prop B in Hot Water With Missouri Ethics Commission**

The Missouri Ethics Commission (MEC) has disciplined The Alliance for Truth, a campaign committee that fought against the passage of Prop B, the puppy mill ballot initiative. The MEC additionally disciplined the treasurer of The Alliance for Truth, Mark Patterson, and imposed fees against them both in the amount of \$61,500. This action is in response to a multitude of alleged violations regarding the disclosure of campaign finances used in their failed attempt to defeat Prop B.

Mr. Patterson is also the CEO of The Cavalry Group, which according to its website, is “protecting and defending animal enterprises.” The Alliance for Truth is an affiliate of the Cavalry Group.

In addition to activities related to Prop B, the Cavalry Group filed a lawsuit in September of 2012 challenging the constitutionality of the Canine Cruelty Prevention Act. The Cavalry Group was particularly opposed to the provision in the new law that mandated that dogs be provided constant and unfettered access to the outdoors.

During the hearing on that lawsuit, Mr. Patterson testified that the dog breeders did not have a clear understanding of what “constant” and “unfettered” access to the outdoors meant. Under cross examination by the Attorney General’s office, Mr. Patterson was asked to read the definition of “constant” and “unfettered” from a dictionary. After reading the definitions, Mr. Patterson retorted that nowhere in the rules does it refer breeders to a dictionary. Under redirect, he argued that “even words with defined meaning need further clarification from the Department of Agriculture.”

Such arguments held little credibility with the Court and The Cavalry Group failed in their legal efforts to overturn the Canine Cruelty Prevention Act. An Assistant Attorney General summed up the case well in his closing arguments when he asserted that dogs are simply commodities to commercial dog breeders in this state. ([Click here](#) to read the entire MEC filing)

The Alliance for Truth, an affiliate of the Cavalry Group, also did not fare well in their appearance before the Missouri Ethics Commission. The MEC alleged that while the group operates a website that stated, “The Alliance for Truth is a non-profit affiliate of the Cavalry Group” the MEC contends it was “not registered as a nonprofit corporation.”

The MEC also found probable cause that the Alliance for Truth failed to “timely and accurately report contributions and expenditures” and made “unauthorized use of committee’s contributions,” and “did so knowingly.”

Watch Olivia Munn’s Interview with The Alliance for Truth’s representative during the Prop B campaign. [Click here.](#)