

Food Democracy Now fined by Washington state for failing to disclose donors to anti-labeling initiative

An anti-GMO activist group was fined \$319,281 by a Washington state judge [Nov. 21] for violating the same disclosure law that the processed food industry broke during the high-stakes 2013 initiative battle over labeling genetically modified food.

Food Democracy Now's failure to report the names of some 7,000 campaign donors can't be excused as an oversight, Thurston County Superior Court Judge Gary Tabor said. "The term that came to me was 'sloppy.'"

The Iowa-based organization set up a political committee, Food Democracy Action, to support I-522, which would have made Washington the first state to require labels on products with GMO ingredients.

The political committee spent \$295,661, but didn't disclose its contributors until after the election.

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Reached by phone after the hearing, David Murphy, Food Democracy's founder and executive director, said he will appeal.

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The judgment is one of the larger penalties ever in a case involving Washington's disclosure commission. But it is dwarfed by the \$18 million fine issued this month against the Grocery Manufacturers Association by another Thurston County judge.

GMA did not report until shortly before the election the food and beverage companies that contributed \$11 million to defeat I-522.

GMA has indicated it will appeal. If upheld, the fine will be by far the largest ever in the U.S. for not reporting political activities.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Washington judge fines anti-GMO activist group nearly \\$320,000](#)