

# Court: Hildebrand not to be disqualified

Text Transcript

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By Melissa Sullivan, *The Battalion*

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The Texas A&M Judicial Court unanimously voted Tuesday to not disqualify Student Body President-elect Jack Hildebrand for improperly disclosing campaign finances and prorating unused materials, but said that changes need to be made by the Election Commission before next year's election.

Jonathan Platt, a senior political science major and member of Will McAdams' campaign team, said Hildebrand failed to disclose shipping and handling costs of stickers and wristbands purchased online from a Lubbock-based company that were used in the campaign.

According to finance reports, Hildebrand purchased 1,000 wristbands for 22 cents apiece and 1,000 stickers for 6.89 cents apiece from Scarborough Specialties Inc. in Lubbock.

Only 750 of the wristbands and only 704 stickers were used, Platt said.

Platt said a petition was filed because the Election Commission was interpreting rules the way it wanted to and it

was not being fair.

Platt said the only reason Hildebrand was mentioned in the hearing was because the Election Commission audited his finance report due to his involvement in the runoff election.

Daniel Jones, chief justice of the court, said the court decided that it was wrong of the Election Commission to tell Hildebrand that he did not need to include the shipping and handling costs in the finance report.

"It wasn't fair to disqualify Mr. Hildebrand from the race because he would not have spent the money if the Election Commission told him not to," Jones said.

Corbett Walther, vice chief justice and a senior finance major, said the Election Commission also erred in allowing the practice of prorating unused election materials, even though no candidate was at a serious disadvantage.

"The main thing to stress is that Mr. Hildebrand did nothing wrong," Walther said. "He followed suggestions exactly like he was given."

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See Hildebrand on page 2

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*The Battalion* reports on *Hildebrand v. Election Commissioner Graham* (2004). Image courtesy of Cushing Memorial Library and Archives, Texas A&M University.

## Hildebrand

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In the future, the Election Commission needs to either disallow proration, or make it clear to everyone that it is an option,' Walther said. 'It is their duty to provide an equal opportunity for every candidate, no matter what the workload would be by doing so.'

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