

Mo. Congressman, State House Dem Fined

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JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) -- Citing financial irregularities, the state Ethics Commission has handed out a small fine to U.S. Rep. Russ Carnahan and a much larger one to the Missouri House Democratic Campaign Committee.

The commission fined Carnahan \$600 and the Democratic committee \$104,000 for various campaign finance violations.

The fine on the committee, which raises money for state House candidates, is among the largest ever levied by the commission.

The commission found that the committee during the 2002 elections failed to file proper financial reports and mixed money with another campaign committee.

The commission also found that Carnahan, at the time a state House member, signed checks for the committee that he wasn't authorized to.

Carnahan, a Democrat elected to Congress in 2004, will pay the fine from his personal funds, his spokesman said.

The Democratic committee must pay \$60,000 by July 31, and the remainder will be suspended if it follows campaign finance law through 2008, the ethics commission said.

Democratic Party spokesman Jack Cardetti said Wednesday the committee has a better tracking system now.