

Bernie Sanders' hiring of non-American campaign advisers may violate federal election laws, complaint says

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Belén Sisa, a millennial left-wing activist from Arizona, joined Bernie Sanders' 2020 presidential campaign in February. She shared a photo taken with Sanders from 2015 on her Facebook page. (Facebook)

Bernie Sanders was hit with a complaint this week, claiming his [presidential campaign](#) violated federal election laws by employing non-Americans in advisory positions.

A new complaint by the Coolidge Reagan Foundation filed with the Federal Election Commission (FEC) notes that three members of the [Sanders](#) campaign are foreign nationals, which appears to be a violation of federal election laws that prohibit foreign interference.

NEW SPOKESWOMAN FOR BERNIE SANDERS WON'T BE ABLE TO VOTE FOR HIM IN 2020 -- SHE'S AN ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT

Maria Belén Sisa, Sanders' deputy national press secretary who joined the campaign last month, was among the staffers named in the complaint, as first reported by the [Washington Free Beacon](#). Sisa claims to be an illegal immigrant whose residency is protected under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), an Obama-era program for assisting illegal immigrants who came to the U.S. as children.

Sisa recently caused an uproar after invoking an anti-Semitic “dual allegiance” trope of Jewish Americans while defending Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., and questioning whether American Jews, including Sanders, were loyal to the United States.



[Video](#)

The complaint notes that Sisa not only got a salary from Sanders’ 2016 presidential campaign, she also contributed money to it and is now serving in “an advisory position” in the 2020 campaign – all of which are “direct and serious violations” of federal election laws.

“Senator Sanders and Bernie 2020 is permitting a foreign national, Ms. Sisa, to serve in an advisory position which allows her to directly or indirectly participate in the decision-making process of persons with regard to election-related activities in violation of FEC regulations,” the complaint reads.

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— *The complaint*

BERNIE SANDERS AIDE DEFENDS OMAR WITH TERM SEEN AS ANTI-SEMITIC, APOLOGIZES

According to the FEC rules, foreign nationals, who aren't lawfully admitted permanent residents, cannot directly or indirectly participate in political campaigns. Such individuals are also barred from making political contributions.

The complaint also names two other foreign nationals on the Sanders' 2016 campaign, immigration activists Erika Andiola and Cesar Vargas, who worked as the campaign's national Latino outreach strategist and press secretary for Latino outreach, respectively.

"Due to the high profile of Cesar Vargas, Erika Andiola, and Maria Belén Sisa as leading activists in the undocumented community, there is reason to believe that respondents are 'foreign nationals' within the meaning of 52 U.S.C. § 301219b)(2), and in violation of 11 C.F.R. § 110.20 (i) and A.O. 2004-26, directly or indirectly participated in the decision-making process of persons with regard to the election-related activities of Bernie 2016," the complaint continued.

"There is reason to believe, having previously employed Ms. Sisa, that Bernie 2020 is currently, and knowingly, permitting a 'foreign national' ... to directly or indirectly participate in the decision-making process of persons with regard to the election-related activities of Bernie 2020."



[Video](#)

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The complaint calls on the FEC to investigate both the 2016 and the current presidential campaigns and take action to curb the violations.

“The Commission should determine and impose appropriate sanctions for any and all violations,” the complaint read. “Further, the Commission should enjoin respondents from any future violations and impose any necessary and appropriate remedies to ensure respondents’ future compliance with the Federal Election Campaign Act.”