

## United States Senate

### SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

July 7, 2025

Dear Colleague:

The Select Committee on Ethics (the Committee) recently received multiple requests for advice regarding whether it is permissible under Senate Rules and related standards of conduct to permit or deny law firms, lobbying firms, and their clients access to a Member or a Member's office based on an actual or perceived relationship with a presidential administration.

In relevant part, Senate Rule 43 states that "[t]he decision to provide assistance to petitioners may not be made on the basis of contributions or services, or promises of contributions or services, to the Member's political campaigns or to other organizations in which the Member has a political, personal, or financial interest."<sup>1</sup> Under circumstances similar to the most recent requests for Committee advice, in 1987 and 2002, the Committee iterated the restrictions and intent of Senate Rule 43.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, the Committee affirmed that it is neither necessary nor appropriate for Members to offer special treatment or deny access based on party affiliation, political contributions, or past employment. The Committee further stated that it would also violate Senate Rule 43 to encourage others to offer special treatment or deny access based on the same criteria.

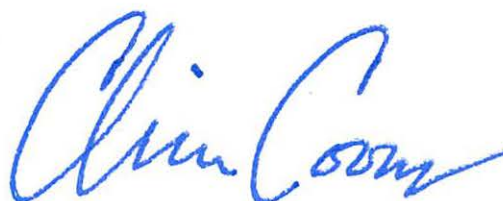
While there are many appropriate, practical, and necessary reasons for a Member or Senate employee to decline a meeting or other request, the categorical denial of access to a Member or a Member's office, or the encouragement of others to deny access, based solely on an actual or perceived political affiliation, history of campaign contributions, or the actual or perceived relationship with any presidential administration or executive branch department or agency would violate Senate Rule 43.

If you have questions not addressed in this letter regarding Senate Rule 43 or any other standard of conduct, please do not hesitate to contact the Committee at (202) 224-2981.

Sincerely,



James Lankford  
Chairman



Christopher A. Coons  
Vice Chairman

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<sup>1</sup> Senate Rule 43.3

<sup>2</sup> See *Select Committee on Ethics Interpretative Ruling 427* (Sep. 25, 1987); *Select Committee on Ethics Dear Colleague letter* (Aug. 1, 2002).