

United States Senate

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS
HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 220
SECOND AND CONSTITUTION AVENUE, NE
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6425

Annual Report of the Select Committee on Ethics 114th Congress, Second Session

January 28, 2016

The Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007 (the “Act”) calls for the Select Committee on Ethics of the United States Senate to issue an annual report not later than January 31st of each year providing information in certain categories describing its activities for the preceding year. Reported below is the information describing the Committee’s activities in 2015 in the categories set forth in the Act:

(1) The number of alleged violations of Senate rules received from any source, including the number raised by a Senator or staff of the Committee: 55. (In addition, 2 alleged violations from the previous year were carried into 2015.)

(2) The number of alleged violations that were dismissed—

(A) For lack of subject matter jurisdiction or in which, even if the allegations in the complaint are true, no violation of Senate rules would exist: 36.

(B) Because they failed to provide sufficient facts as to any material violation of the Senate rules beyond mere allegation or assertion: 13.

(3) The number of alleged violations for which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry: 7. (This figure includes 2 matters from the previous calendar year carried into 2015.)

(4) The number of alleged violations for which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry that resulted in an adjudicatory review: 0.

(5) The number of alleged violations for which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry and the Committee dismissed the matter for lack of substantial merit or because it was inadvertent, technical or otherwise of a *de minimis* nature: 5.

(6) The number of alleged violations for which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry and the Committee issued private or public letters of admonition: 0.

(7) The number of matters resulting in a disciplinary sanction: 0.

(8) Any other information deemed by the Committee to be appropriate to describe its activities in the previous year:

- In 2015, the Committee staff conducted **seven new Member and staff ethics training**

sessions; 20 Member and committee office campaign briefings (includes one remedial training session); 20 employee code of conduct training sessions; 13 public financial disclosure clinics, seminars, and webinars; 27 ethics seminars and customized briefings for Member DC offices, state offices, and Senate committees; two private sector ethics briefings; and five international briefings.

- **In 2015, the Committee staff handled approximately 10,265 telephone inquiries and 2,784 inquiries by email for ethics advice and guidance.**
- **In 2015, the Committee wrote approximately 930 ethics advisory letters and responses including, but not limited to, 793 travel and gifts matters (Senate Rule 35) and 83 conflict of interest matters (Senate Rule 37).**
- **In 2015, the Committee received 3,179 public financial disclosure and periodic disclosure of financial transactions reports.**