

United States Senate

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

March 23, 2023

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Public Letter of Admonition

Dear Senator Graham:

Pursuant to its authority under Senate Resolution 338, the Select Committee on Ethics (the Committee) reviewed an allegation that you violated Senate Rules and related standards of conduct by soliciting campaign contributions in a federal building. The Committee finds that your conduct was contrary to Senate standards of conduct and, accordingly, issues you this Public Letter of Admonition.

The Committee initiated its inquiry after receiving a complaint alleging that you solicited campaign contributions in support of Georgia senatorial candidate Herschel Walker during a media interview conducted in the Russell Senate Office Building on November 30, 2022. The complaint included a link to a video clip of the interview, which the Committee has reviewed as well as the information you provided to the Committee regarding this matter.

Based upon all available information, the Committee concluded that on November 30, 2022, you conducted a media interview with Fox News in the rotunda of the Russell Senate Office Building and that your interview was slightly over nine minutes, with over four minutes devoted to a discussion of the 2022 senatorial run-off election in Georgia. The Committee further concluded that during your discussion of the senatorial run-off election, you directly solicited campaign contributions on behalf of Mr. Walker's campaign committee, www.teamherschel.com, five separate times.

Your actions on November 30, 2022, represented a repeat violation of Senate standards of conduct. On October 14, 2020, immediately following a Judiciary Committee hearing, you engaged in an unplanned media interview in the Dirksen Senate Office Building. In response to a reporter's question regarding your reelection campaign fundraising, you directly solicited campaign contributions for your campaign committee. While the Committee concluded your conduct violated Senate standards of conduct, it considered several mitigating factors, and in accordance with the Committee's Rules of Procedure, determined your conduct was "inadvertent, technical, or otherwise of a *de minimis* nature." On March 8, 2021, the Committee dismissed the complaint and notified you of the Committee's findings and action by private letter.

The Committee is charged with upholding the ethical standards of the U.S. Senate, a responsibility both broader than and distinct from criminal law. The specific prohibition on campaign solicitation in federal buildings and the restrictions on the use of official resources for campaign activity have been consistent and clear throughout your years of Senate service, and the Committee is confident the Senate community understands this standard and its rationale.

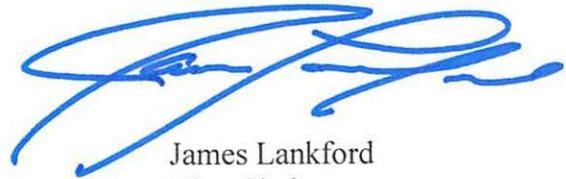
Applying this standard to your conduct, the Committee finds that you did solicit federal campaign contributions and otherwise impermissibly conducted campaign activity in a federal building. Further, you made these campaign solicitations despite the Committee's specific guidance following your violation in October 2020. The Committee does acknowledge that you did self-report your conduct to the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

The public must feel confident that Members use public resources only for official actions in the best interests of the United States, not for partisan political activity. Your actions failed to uphold that standard, resulting in harm to the public trust and confidence in the United States Senate. You are hereby admonished.

Sincerely,



Christopher A. Coons
Chairman



James Lankford
Vice Chairman