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ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

## U.S. House of Representatives

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September 30, 2015

The Honorable Candice S. Miller  
U.S. House of Representatives  
320 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert A. Brady  
U.S. House of Representatives  
102 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Colleagues:

This responds to your letter dated September 18, 2015, to the Committee on Ethics (Committee) seeking guidance on the applicability of the House ethics rules on proposed regulations for officially-sanctioned competitions that the Committee on House Administration (CHA) is considering adopting. This letter follows and elaborates on informal advice you have previously been given by Committee counsel.

The proposed regulations authorize Members to use official resources to participate in and support academic or civic competitions meant for constituent participation and sponsored by a non-congressional person or entity as long as the competition meets certain criteria as approved by the Chair and Ranking Member of CHA. Included in the proposed regulations is a provision that permits Members to solicit for donations to support a competition approved by CHA on the condition of receiving written approval from the Committee.

As you are aware, official funds may be used only for the purposes appropriated.<sup>1</sup> House rules impart jurisdiction over the proper expenditure of money appropriated to the House to CHA.<sup>2</sup> Members, officers, and employees of the House are generally prohibited from soliciting for donations, whether monetary or in-kind, from or on behalf of another unless the Committee approves the solicitation.<sup>3</sup> To the extent that the proposed regulations raise questions within the

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<sup>1</sup> 31 U.S.C. § 1301(a).

<sup>2</sup> House Rule 10, cl. 1(k).

<sup>3</sup> 5 U.S.C. § 7353.

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jurisdiction of the Committee, we conclude that the proposed regulations are consistent with the House rules and other standards of conduct.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Committee's Office of Advice and Education at extension 5-7103.

Sincerely,



Charles W. Dent  
Chairman



Linda T. Sánchez  
Ranking Member

CWD/LTS:kd