



FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20463

6/23/95

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Commission
Staff Director
General Counsel
FEC Press Office
FEC Public Records

FROM: *MW* Marjorie W. Emmons/Mary Dove
Secretary of the Commission

DATE: June 23, 1995

SUBJECT: COMMENT: PROPOSED AO 1995-20

Transmitted herewith is a timely submitted comment from Representative Tim Roemer on behalf of the Hoosiers for Tim Roemer Committee.

Proposed Advisory Opinion 1995-20 is on the agenda for June 29, 1995.

Attachment:

2 pages



June 22, 1995

Ms. Marjorie Emmons
Commission Secretary
Federal Election Commission
999 E Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20463

Dear Ms. Emmons:

I am writing to submit additional comments on the draft advisory opinion which the Federal Election Commission issued on June 22, 1995, concerning my inquiry about the use of campaign funds to pay for travel-related expenses for my two-year old son.

I strongly disagree with this advisory opinion, and request that you bring my additional comments to the members of the Commission as soon as possible, so they can be considered prior to the vote on June 29.

I understand the importance of clarifying the rules governing the personal use of campaign funds. There have been instances in the past in which candidates used campaign funds to purchase automobiles, clothes and other expensive items which clearly provided personal benefits. I fully support the FEC's efforts to end such egregious practices.

In this case, however, there is no tangible benefit being derived by me or anyone else in my family through the purchase of an airline ticket for my two-year old son. As an infant, it does not make any difference to him whether he is in Indiana or Washington, as long as he is with his parents.

It seems to me that the litmus test for the FEC in deciding personal use questions should be whether or not there is a tangible personal gain resulting from the expenditure of campaign funds. If there is no tangible personal gain, then I believe the FEC should allow some flexibility in applying its criteria.

Moreover, there are times when my children will be directly involved in campaign-related activities. For example, they will accompany my wife and me to Indiana when we take the photographs for our family Christmas card and for campaign-related mailings. I also plan to have my children with me when I attend certain political events such as picnics. I regret that I did not make this clear when I first requested an advisory opinion on this matter.

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Ms. Marjorie Emmons
June 22, 1995
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I am also concerned about the anti-family sentiment of this advisory opinion. It is already very difficult for young parents like myself to serve in office, because the job requires us to spend so much time apart from our families. If the FEC further limits our ability to spend time with our children, it will only discourage candidates with young children from seeking office.

I would urge the Commissioners to look beyond the strict interpretation of personal use which formed the basis for this advisory opinion, and consider the broader issue that is at stake in this case. That is, the needs of young children to be with their parents at all times, even when one of them happens to be a U.S. Congressman.

I would hope that the FEC's guidelines are flexible enough to distinguish between cases in which campaign funds are clearly being used for personal gain, and those which address the unique circumstances involving candidates or officeholders who are the parents of young children and need to be with them.

Thank you very much for your consideration of these additional comments. I look forward to hearing from the FEC on this matter.

Sincerely,



Tim Roemer
Member of Congress

TR:mbn