

THE WHITE HOUSE

Washington

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMISSIONED OFFICERS IN THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE

FROM: Counsel to the President

SUBJECT: Waiver Certification Under Section 3 of Executive Order 13770 for Ethics Pledge Paragraph 6

Pursuant to section 3 of Executive Order 13770, “Ethics Commitments by Executive Branch Employees,” (“Ethics Pledge”), I am issuing this memorandum to provide a limited waiver to the restrictions found in paragraph 6 of the Ethics Pledge for all commissioned officers in the White House Office.<sup>1</sup> This limited waiver allows commissioned officers to participate in communications and meetings with the following listed organizations on matters of broad policy matters and particular matters of general applicability, notwithstanding the limitations found in paragraph 6 of the Ethics Pledge. The entities subject to this limited waiver are: Donald J. Trump for President, Inc.; the Republican National Committee; the National Republican Congressional Committee; the Republican Governor’s Association; the National Republican Senatorial Committee; and the Republican Attorneys General Association (“Covered Political Organizations”).

In addition to other restrictions found in the Ethics Pledge, paragraph 6 establishes certain restrictions related to an appointee’s “former employers”<sup>2</sup> and “former clients.”<sup>3</sup> In particular, paragraph 6 prohibits all appointees, including commissioned officers, from:

- Participating in any particular matter involving specific parties in which a “former employer” or “former client” is a party or represents a party for two years from the date of their appointment; and

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<sup>1</sup> A commissioned officer is any employee who is appointed under 3 U.S.C. 105(a) or 3 U.S.C. 107(a) and has received a commission from the President, and any employee who has been detailed to the White House Office and has received a commission from the President for the position they hold in the White House Office.

<sup>2</sup> A “former employer” is defined by the pledge as “any person for whom the appointee has within the 2 years prior to the date of his or her appointment served as an employee, officer, director, trustee, or general partner, except that ‘former employer’ does not include any executive agency or other entity of the Federal Government, State or local government, the District of Columbia, Native American tribe, or any United States territory or possession.” Executive Order 13770, Sec. 2(j).

<sup>3</sup> A “former client” is defined by the pledge as “any person for whom the appointee served personally as agent, attorney, or consultant within the 2 years prior to the date of his or her appointment, but excluding instances where the service provided was limited to a speech or similar appearance. It does not include clients of the appointee’s former employer to whom the appointee did not personally provide services.” Executive Order 13770, Sec. 2(i).

- Participating in any official meeting or communication with a former employer or former client, except where such meeting or communication relates to a particular matter of general applicability and the meeting or other event is open to all interested parties.

After careful consideration, I have determined that it is appropriate and in the public interest to provide a limited waiver of the restrictions in section 1, paragraph 6, of the Executive Order to allow commissioned officers, who may otherwise be barred from communicating or meeting with the Covered Political Organizations under that paragraph, to participate in meetings and communications with the Covered Political Organizations regarding broad policy matters and particular matters of general applicability in their official capacity even if the communication or meeting is not “open to all interested parties.” The Administration has an interest in interacting with the Covered Political Organizations on issues of importance to the Administration. It is important that all commissioned officers be able to communicate and meet with the Covered Political Organizations, and disqualification from such meetings or communications would limit the ability of the White House Office to effectively carry out Administration priorities.

Although this waiver permits commissioned officers to communicate and meet with the Covered Political Organizations on broad policy matters and particular matters of general applicability, commissioned officers whose former employer or former client includes a Covered Political Organization will continue to be precluded from participating in any other particular matter involving specific parties, such as any investigation, application, request for a ruling or determination, rulemaking, contract, controversy, claim, charge, accusation, arrest, or judicial or other proceeding that is focused on identified parties and in which that Covered Political Organization is a party or represents a party.

This limited waiver does not affect the application of any other provision of law, including any other provision of the Ethics Pledge; the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Executive Branch Employees (5 C.F.R. part 2635); the criminal bribery, graft and conflict of interest statutes (18 U.S.C. 201-209); or the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. 7323).