

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

WAIVER OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 13770
ATTENDANCE AT THE 2018 AIPAC POLICY CONFERENCE

In accordance with Section 3 of Executive Order 13770 (January 28, 2017) (the “Executive Order”) and for the reasons stated below, I hereby submit that it is in the public interest to grant to employees of the White House Office of the Executive Office of the President (“WHO Employees”) a waiver of the Ethics Pledge restriction set forth in Section 1, paragraph 5, of the Executive Order to enable them to effectively carry out their duties in advising the President with respect to Middle East policy. Absent this waiver, WHO employees would be unable to attend the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (“AIPAC”) Policy Conference, March 4 to 6, 2018, where they will have the opportunity to discuss policy matters and exchange views with government leaders and other interested parties.

Section 1, paragraph 5 of the Executive Order prohibits presidential appointees from accepting gifts from registered lobbyists or lobbying organizations during the term of their appointment. AIPAC is a 501(c)(4) organization that employs or retains registered lobbyists. WHO Employees therefore may not accept any gift, including an offer of free attendance to an AIPAC-sponsored event, from AIPAC.

From March 4 to 6, 2018, AIPAC is hosting its annual Policy Conference in Washington, DC. The Conference is expected to be attended by more than 18,000 people from all 50 states. Israeli Ministers, Members of the Israeli Knesset, and more than two-thirds of the Members of Congress are expected to attend. The Conference will feature speeches by American and Israeli leaders and members of the international community on issues of high importance to the Administration.

Without a waiver, WHO employees who advise the President on Middle East policy will be unable to attend the Conference, hear from these leaders, and exchange views with individuals involved in these issues. The significant public interest in the ability of WHO Employees to interact with these individuals on a policy matter of significant interest to the President requires that Administration officials be permitted to attend the AIPAC Policy Conference.

For this reason, the Office of Counsel to the President has determined that it is in the public interest to grant to EOP employees a waiver of the Ethics Pledge restriction set forth in Section 1, paragraph 5, of the Executive Order to enable them to effectively carry out their duties by attending the AIPAC Conference.