

Robert Walker Discusses Top Congressional Ethics Stories of 2013

Roll Call

December 12, 2013

Robert L. Walker, an attorney in Wiley Rein's Election Law & Government Ethics Practice, was quoted in a December 10 article in *Roll Call* listing some of the top congressional ethics stories of 2013.

The article, citing the ancient Roman senator Tacitus, theorized that as more federal laws are passed, there are more cases of government corruption. There were plenty of examples this year, *Roll Call* reported.

Mr. Walker, a former chief counsel and staff director for both the House and Senate ethics committees, said that one of 2013's biggest stories on Capitol Hill was the scandal surrounding Rick Renzi, the former Arizona congressman who was convicted this Summer of 17 violations of federal criminal law, including extortion, bribery, insurance fraud, money laundering, and racketeering. In October, Renzi was sentenced to three years in prison.

Another political storyline, significant "from a process point of view," was the confirmation of the Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE) "as a fixture" in the ethics process, Mr. Walker told *Roll Call*. When the OCE was established in 2008, it got off to a rocky start with the House Ethics Committee as they hashed out territorial disagreements. That has since changed.

"The OCE and House Ethics Committee have arrived at a *modus vivendi* allowing them to exercise their overlapping—some might say redundant—investigative authorities," said Mr. Walker.

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