

Election Law Attorney Robert Walker Quoted in *Roll Call* Article about House Ethics Committee Ruling

Roll Call

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Robert Walker, an attorney in Wiley Rein's Election Law & Government Ethics Practice, was quoted commenting on a recent ruling by the House Ethics Committee regarding fundraising events. In a ruling issued last week, the Ethics Committee denied a recommendation from the Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE) that the Committee investigate fundraising events held by several congressmen that may have violated House rules. The OCE compared those fundraising events to one held by former Congressman Tom DeLay (R-TX) in 2002 for which chastised DeLay for creating the "appearance" of special access for energy company executives at the event.

There has been debate and confusion since the decision, with some arguing that it weakens current standards in place to prevent members of Congress from giving donors special access. Mr. Walker—a former staff director of the House and Senate Ethics panels—said that "it was the OCE's own investigation that created confusion over the timing and focus of campaign fundraisers." "I think the committee's action here will clarify a situation that has been very much in limbo since these OCE inquiries began," he continued. "The committee has not abandoned what it said in the DeLay matter, but what it did say here is that not every occurrence of raising funds from individuals or entities who may have interests in legislation ... is a violation," Walker said. "That was open to some question under the OCE view of things," he concluded.

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Practice Areas

Election Law & Government Ethics