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One Hundred Seventeenth
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

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June 10, 2021

Representative Anna G. Eshoo
272 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Michael McCaul
2001 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Colleagues:

We are writing in response to your letter of April 23, 2021, regarding a request for approval of the “Congressional App Challenge” (Challenge) as an officially-sanctioned competition for the 117th Congress. The Challenge will be sponsored by the Internet Education Foundation (IEF) and be co-chaired by you.

The Committee on House Administration has issued regulations regarding officially-sanctioned competitions.¹ Under these regulations, the Committee is required to assess each Congress whether a particular proposed officially-sanctioned competition comports with its regulations, regardless of whether the competition has been approved in a prior Congress.² Under these regulations, among other things, “a Member may use his or her MRA [Members’ Representational Allowance] in a limited fashion to support officially-sanctioned competitions.” Specifically, only the following official resources may be used in support of an officially-sanctioned competition:

1. The Frank, provided the content of such communication is frankable;
2. Advertisements that are otherwise compliant with [Members’ Congressional] Handbook and Franking regulations;
3. Food and beverage expenses that are otherwise compliant with Handbook regulations;
4. Rental of rooms, chairs, and audio systems that are otherwise compliant with Handbook regulations;
5. Gifts and donations that are otherwise compliant;
6. Staff time and the use of incidental resources;
7. Use of letterhead and official seal of the House by the Member office, provided such letterhead and seal are not used for solicitations;
8. Mileage; and
9. Member official web site and social media.

¹ Comm. on House Admin., *Members’ Congressional Handbook*, 117th Cong., at 18-20.

² *Id.* at 18.

We understand from you, your staff, and IEF that you are familiar with and understand the Committee's regulations and that the Challenge will comply with them. Accordingly, we approve the Challenge as described in your letter and the June 7, 2021, letter from IEF.

Any Member who wishes to solicit donations (including in-kind donations) on behalf of the officially-sanctioned competition must first receive written approval from the Committee on Ethics.³ In general, a Member must receive such approval from Ethics in writing prior to making any solicitations, and Ethics may prescribe restrictions and conditions for any solicitations.⁴

Please note that this approval is based on the facts as described to the Committee. The Committee must be informed of any proposed change to the structure or nature of the Challenge. The Committee reserves the right to decline to approve a proposed change or reconsider prior approval of a competition if it determines in its sole judgment that the terms and conditions of the Challenge no longer accord with the Committee's regulations regarding officially-sanctioned competitions. If you have any questions, please contact the Committee at (202) 225-2061 (majority) or (202) 225-8281 (minority).

Sincerely,



Zoe Lofgren
Chairperson



Rodney Davis
Ranking Member

CC: Chairman Ted Deutch, Committee on Ethics
Ranking Member Jackie Walorski, Committee on Ethics
Tim Lordan, Executive Director, Internet Education Foundation

³ *Id.* at 21.

⁴ 5 U.S.C. § 7353; Comm. on Ethics, "Request to Solicit for Officially-Sanctioned Competitions," available at [STEM Solicitation Waiver 2020.pdf \(house.gov\)](#) (form for 2020 competition).