

## Significant Ethics Reform Developments in Congress, 1958-2007

- 1958–Congress adopts first Code of Ethics (non-statutory) for all government employees, including Members of Congress (H. Con. Res. 175, 85<sup>th</sup> Congress), in response to White House Chief-of-Staff Sherman Adams scandal (accepting expensive gifts).
- 1964–Senate establishes six-member bipartisan Select Committee on Standards and Conduct to investigate allegations of improper conduct by Senators and staff in wake of influence peddling scandal involving Senate Majority Secretary Bobby Baker.
- 1966–In reaction to scandal involving Rep. Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. (D-N.Y.) House creates select committee to recommend an enforceable code of ethics. Committee in existence for two months before Congress adjourns; recommends creation of a permanent committee in next Congress to draft ethics code and conduct investigations into improper conduct by Members and staff.
- 1967–House creates a 12-member bipartisan, standing Committee on Standards of Official Conduct with investigative authority, with Rep. Melvin Price (D-Ill.) its first chairman.
- 1968–House adopts first Code of Official Conduct; makes Standards Committee permanent.
- 1977–House and Senate adopt sweeping Codes of Conduct with financial disclosure requirements, limits on outside income, abolition of unofficial office accounts, limits on gift acceptance and use of congressional mailing provisions; and translate them into statutory law carrying strong enforcement mechanisms and penalties.
- 1978–Congress enacts Ethics in Government Act applicable to all three branches with financial disclosure, gift and outside income limits, limits on honoraria, restrictions on foreign travel (Public Law 95-521).
- 1989–Congress enacts Ethics Reform Act recommended by the House Bipartisan Leadership Task Force on Ethics (Reps. Fazio & Martin) setting new restrictions on government officials’ conduct, including the banning honoraria (Public Law 101-194).
- 1995–House and Senate adopt tight new gift rules; enact Congressional Accountability Act applying workplace and anti-discrimination laws to Congress (Public Law 104-1).
- 1997–House adopts Ethics Reform Task Force (Reps. Livingston & Cardin) recommendations for new ethics committee procedures (H. Res. 168).
- 2007–House adopts new gift, travel, and lobby rules for Members on opening day of 110<sup>th</sup> Congress (H. Res. 6); Senate begins debate on ethics/lobby reform legislation (S. 1).