

MEDIA MENTION

Election Law Partner Weighs in on Senator's Request to Use Campaign Funds to Purchase Autobiography

The Washington Times

January 25, 2011

Election Law & Government Ethics Practice partner Caleb Burns was quoted commenting on Senator Scott Brown's (R-MA) plan to use his campaign funds to purchase copies of his autobiography. According to a letter sent to federal election regulators, Sen. Brown intends to give copies of the book to donors and backers as thank you gifts. Mr. Burns said that "the FEC generally has allowed political campaigns to use funds to buy and promote a politician's book—just as long as the candidate doesn't benefit personally." He added that "the options presented in Mr. Brown's request are a 'clear nod' to the FEC's past rulings on the issue." A slightly more complicated issue could be how the FEC will view Sen. Brown's intentions to hold political fundraisers while he is on tour promoting the book. Mr. Burns said that "the question could be thorny." "The question is whether or not the cost of the travel can be borne by the publisher because of the prescheduled book event or whether the campaign has to pay," he explained. "The relevant FEC regulations are written broadly, and their application is not always clear," Mr. Burns concluded.

Related Professionals

Caleb P. Burns
Partner
202.719.7451
cburns@wiley.law

Practice Areas

Election Law & Government Ethics