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Michael Toner Discusses Obama's Major Ad Buy and Attack Ads in Massachusetts
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Los Angeles Times; The Associated Press
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Michael Toner, co-chair of the Election Law & Government Ethics Practice, was interviewed by the *Los Angeles Times* for a story on President Obama's reelection campaign laying the groundwork for a major television advertising buy in the coming months.

The Times reports that Obama campaign officials "have requested ad rates from television stations in at least 14 states, according to a strategist with a prominent political media agency, the first step they would take before deciding to purchase air time."

"The Obama campaign has really studied the Bush re-election playbook of 2004," said Mr. Toner, former chairman of the Federal Election Commission and counsel to the 2000 Bush-Cheney campaign. "They've looked at how [the] Bush campaign dismantled Kerry. [They] immediately turned and blasted Kerry literally within days of Kerry being the presumptive nominee."

The Associated Press reports that Republican U.S. Senator Scott Brown and rival Democrat Elizabeth Warren both want to prevent third-party groups from launching political attack ads during their looming showdown for Brown's Massachusetts Senate seat. But the article adds that the politicians are hamstrung in their power to do so.

Mr. Toner told the *AP* that he would advise candidates against calling up a third-party group directly, even if it is to ask them to pull down negative advertising against a rival candidate. "I certainly have advised that if you're a candidate, you should strictly avoid any kind of nonpublic discussion with outside groups," said Mr. Toner. "When

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you get into those kinds of discussions you run into trouble."