



U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

Washington, DC 20515

December 15, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL MEMBERS, OFFICERS, AND EMPLOYEES

FROM: Committee on Ethics
Susan Wild, Chairwoman
Michael Guest, Acting Ranking Member

SUBJECT: Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act CY 2022 Reporting Reminder

The Constitution prohibits federal government officials, including Members and employees of Congress, from receiving “any present ... of any kind whatever” from a foreign state or a representative of a foreign government without the consent of the Congress. Congress has consented to the acceptance of certain gifts from foreign governments through the vehicles of the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act (“FGDA”) and the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act (“MECEA”).

Annual Reporting Requirements

The FGDA requires the Committee to compile a list of certain tangible gifts or gifts of travel that House Members, officers, and employees, or their spouse or dependent, accepted from a foreign government or a multinational organization during the preceding calendar year. The Committee is required to send this list for 2022 to the Secretary of State by January 31, 2023, for publication in the *Federal Register*. **Any Member, officer, or employee who accepted any tangible gifts worth more than \$415 or gifts of travel outside the United States, regardless of value, from a foreign government under the FGDA during calendar year 2022, or whose spouse or dependent accepted such gifts, and who has not already reported the gifts to the Committee must complete this [form](#) and return it to the Committee by January 15, 2023.**

If you are an annual financial disclosure filer, you may also need to report these gifts on your annual financial disclosure statement. You may find more information about financial disclosure reporting of foreign gifts in the [FGDA Regulations](#) issued by the Committee.

What You May Accept

Pursuant to the FGDA, Members, officers, and employees may accept and keep a tangible gift valued at less than minimal value from a foreign government that is tendered and received as a souvenir or mark of courtesy, including a meal, entertainment, or local travel within the United States. For FGDA purposes, a “foreign government” includes any foreign national, state, municipal, or local government, but also any unit of foreign governmental authority, any international or multinational organization whose membership is composed of any unit of a foreign government, and any agent or representative of any such unit or organization acting in that capacity. Tangible gifts valued at more than minimal value from a foreign government may only be accepted when refusal would be deemed likely to cause offense or embarrassment or otherwise adversely affect foreign relations of the United States. However, such gifts are deemed to have been accepted on behalf of the United States government, and the recipient must both deposit the gift with the Clerk of the House *within 60 days* of accepting it and file a disclosure report with the Committee.

The FGDA does not permit the acceptance of gifts of travel abroad (such as transportation, food, lodging, and entertainment) unless the travel takes place entirely outside of the United States and is related to official duties or is received under a program approved by the Department of State under MECEA. Reports concerning gifts of travel outside the United States accepted under the FGDA must be filed with the Committee *within 30 days* of accepting the gift of travel, regardless of value.

What is Minimal Value

The General Services Administration sets the amount that constitutes “minimal value.” For gifts received from 2020 to 2022, “minimal value” is \$415. More information about gifts from foreign governments, including the FGDA regulations previously issued by the Committee, is available in the [House Ethics Manual](#). If you have any questions regarding acceptance of tangible gifts or gifts of travel from a foreign government, please call the Committee at 5-7103.