APPENDIX C

Clark Hill

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December 31, 2025

VIA E-MAIL

Comm. Counsel Esq.
Staff Director and Chief Counsel
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Ethics
1015 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C.
[redacted]

Re: In the Matter of U.S. Rep. Michael Collins (R-GA) Committee on Ethics Review of OCE Rev. No. 7736;
In the matter of Brandon Phillips, Committee on Ethics Review of OCE Rev. No.25-7735

Dear Comm. Counsel

We represent Congressman Michael Collins and his Chief of Staff, Brandon Phillips, regarding the Office of Congressional Conduct (OCC) referrals, Review No. 25-7635 (Phillips) and Review No. 25-7636 (Collins) Thank you for sharing these materials with us. We have reviewed both referrals thoroughly. Based both on the many statements in the reports favorable to Congressman Collins and Mr. Phillips and our independent review of these matters, we respectfully request that the Committee vote to dismiss these matters as to both Congressman Collins and Brandon Phillips.

These referrals resulted from the consolidated submission of information to OCC from two disgruntled, former members of Congressman Collins staff. With respect to two of the three matters reviewed by OCC, both reports concluded that "the OCC was not able to reach a determination" on whether there was "a substantial reason to believe the allegations." *See* Collins Report at pp. 31–32, 35; Phillips Report at pp. 26, 31. We request that the Committee take no further action regarding these matters.

With respect to the remaining allegations, they all relate to Mr. Phillips's decision to hire an intern temporarily in the fourth quarters of 2023 and 2024. The evidence is that this temporary hiring was proper and done to assist the Office in serving the interests of the District. Mr. Phillips's decision to hire this intern was well within his discretion in managing the Congressman's office. This intern provided valuable assistance to the Office throughout both years regarding communications and other work of the Office. The temporary hiring and the small amount paid to the intern from available funds in the last quarter of the year were in recognition of the services the intern had provided throughout both years. The intern has continued this important work in 2025. Further review of these allegations will not serve the interests of Representative Collins's constituents or this Committee, and we respectfully request that the Committee close these matters.

Respectfully submitted,

CLARK HILL

[redacted]

Member Counsel

RDD:dmp

THE FIRM OF RECORD

Lex Politica

EST. MMXI

lexpolitica.com | 202.417.3529 | info@lexpolitica.com

July 24, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

The Honorable Michael Guest, Chairman
Committee on Ethics
U.S. House of Representatives
1015 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mark DeSaulnier, Ranking Member
Committee on Ethics
U.S. House of Representatives
1015 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Committee on Ethics' May 12, 2026, Request to Representative Mike Collins

Dear Chairman Guest and Ranking Member DeSaulnier:

Further to our July 13, 2026, letter to the Committee's May 12, 2026, request, enclosed is Representative Collins's response to Request No. 2 concerning Brandon Phillips's employment status, duty station, and service on congressional committees.

Consistent with our prior correspondence, Representative Collins and his congressional office do not concede the accuracy of the allegations described by the Committee. This submission is made without waiver of any applicable privilege, protection, objection, or position, all of which are expressly reserved. Representative Collins and his office further reserve the right to supplement their responses as appropriate.

Sincerely,

[redacted]
Member Counsel
Member Counsel

CC: Committee Counsel (via email: [redacted]@mail.house.gov)
Committee Counsel (via email: [redacted]@mail.house.gov)
Committee Counsel (via email: [redacted]@mail.house.gov)

MIKE COLLINS
10TH DISTRICT, GEORGIA

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT
CHAIRMAN

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSIT

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SPACE & AERONAUTICS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–1010

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COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY & MINERAL RESOURCES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT & INVESTIGATIONS

July 24, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

The Honorable Michael Guest, Chairman
Committee on Ethics
U.S. House of Representatives
1015 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mark DeSaulnier, Ranking Member
Committee on Ethics
U.S. House of Representatives
1015 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Guest and Ranking Member DeSaulnier:

I write in response to Request No. 2 in the Committee's May 12, 2026, letter concerning Brandon Phillips's employment status with my congressional office and committees.

Mr. Phillips was employed by my congressional office from January 3, 2023, through May 5, 2026. He served as Chief of Staff from January 3, 2023, through January 2, 2026. Effective January 3, 2026, his title changed to Senior Policy Adviser and he became a part-time employee. He remained in that position until his employment ended on May 5, 2026.

Mr. Phillips's duty station was Georgia. As Chief of Staff, he traveled to Washington, D.C., when the House was in session and as otherwise needed. As Senior Policy Adviser, his duty station was also Georgia, and he did not travel regularly to Washington, D.C. Mr. Phillips was not shared staff on any of my congressional committees during his employment.

Sincerely,

Mike Collins
Member of Congress

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THE FIRM OF RECORD

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November 9, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

The Honorable Michael Guest, Chairman
Committee on Ethics
U.S. House of Representatives
1015 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mark DeSaulnier, Ranking Member
Committee on Ethics
U.S. House of Representatives
1015 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: September 9, 2026, Letter to Representative Mike Collins

Dear Chairman Guest and Ranking Member DeSaulnier:

We write on behalf of Representative Mike Collins in response to the Committee's September 9 letter proposing that he pay $2,880 to the U.S. Treasury in connection with [redacted] internship compensation. Representative Collins disputes that he owes this amount personally and respectfully declines the proposed resolution.

In her recent email, Brittney Pescatore, the Committee's Director of Investigations, confirmed [redacted] was paid through the House Paid Internship Program rather than through Representative Collins's Members' Representational Allowance ("MRA"). That distinction goes to the heart of whether Representative Collins can be required to repay those funds personally. Congress established a separate allowance for intern compensation under 2 U.S.C. § 5322a, and the Members' Congressional Handbook expressly distinguishes that allowance from the MRA.[1] While the September 9 letter relies on the personal-responsibility provision in the Handbook's MRA section, it identifies no authority extending that provision to the separate internship allowance. That is because it cannot. Neither 2 U.S.C. § 5322a nor the Handbook's provisions governing the House Paid Internship Program impose a personal repayment obligation in these circumstances. Accordingly, the Committee cannot rely on the MRA provision to treat the proposed $2,880 as a debt owed by Representative Collins personally and has no basis for treating amount as a debt owed by him.

[1] *See* 2 U.S.C. § 5322a(a), (d); Comm. on House Admin., *Members' Congressional Handbook* 9 (adopted Sept. 28, 2023) (describing the House Paid Internship Program as "an allowance separate from the MRA for compensation of interns"); *see also* Comm. on House Admin., *Members' Congressional Handbook*, under "House Paid Internship Program," https://cha.house.gov/members-congressional-handbook.

Representative Collins also disputes the Committee's characterization of $2,880 of [redacted] compensation as an overpayment. As the Committee acknowledges, the record shows that [redacted] performed work for the congressional office.[2] The Members' Congressional Handbook gives Members discretion to set intern pay within prescribed limits, and [redacted] payroll figures reflect rates that did not exceed the applicable $38,500 annualized ceiling in either period.[3] In its letter, the Committee calculates the proposed reimbursement using the midpoint between the highest and lowest intern pay rates it reviewed; however, the Handbook sets no such benchmark. Whatever the Committee's other concerns about the internship, [redacted] higher pay relative to some other interns does not establish that her rate was impermissible or that Representative Collins must repay the difference.

As to Mr. Phillips's travel expenses, Representative Collins appreciates the Committee's acknowledgment that the reimbursements were approved through normal channels and its decision not to seek personal reimbursement from him for those expenses.

For the reasons set forth above, Representative Collins respectfully requests that the Committee close this matter without further action. He reserves all rights and objections.

[redacted]
Member Counsel
Member Counsel

CC: Committee Counsel (via email: [redacted]@mail.house.gov)
Committee Counsel (via email: [redacted]@mail.house.gov)
Committee Counsel (via email: [redacted]@mail.house.gov)

Enclosure: October 29, 2026, Email from Ms. Pescatore

[2] Representative Collins knew that [redacted] was an intern, but Mr. Phillips was responsible for supervising her, overseeing her work, and handling her compensation.

[3] *See* Comm. on House Admin., *Members' Congressional Handbook* 8 (adopted Sept. 28, 2023) (giving Members discretion to set intern pay within prescribed limits); Off. of the Chief Admin. Officer, U.S. House of Representatives, *Semiannual Report, July–December 2022* 26 (reporting that the $38,500 annual cap took effect June 1, 2022); Off. of the Chief Admin. Officer, U.S. House of Representatives, *Semiannual Report, July–December 2024*, under "House Paid Internship Program" (confirming the same cap). [redacted] received $5,044.00 for her 2023 internship and $5,244.44 for her 2024 internship, for a total of $10,288.44. Her full-month pay was $3,208.00 in December 2023 and $2,666.67 in November 2024, reflecting annualized rates of $38,496 and approximately $32,000, respectively. *See* COECOLLINS 000001–COECOLLINS 000229.

Outlook

Re: Committee on Ethics

From Committee Counsel <[redacted]@mail.house.gov>
Date Tue 10/29/2026 5:29 PM
To Member Counsel <[redacted]@lexpolitica.com>; Committee Counsel <[redacted]@mail.house.gov>; Member Counsel <[redacted]@lexpolitica.com>
Cc Committee Counsel <[redacted]@mail.house.gov>

1 attachment (682 KB)
paf_member-office-house-paid-internship-program.pdf;

Member Counsel Member Counsel--

Hope you are doing well. I'm sure it's a nice quiet time for you....

I wanted to briefly check in on the Rep. Collins matter and note that while we've been using the term "MRA" interchangeably with other applicable official allowances, it looks like [redacted] was paid from the House Paid Internship Program, rather than Rep. Collins' MRA, as stated in OCC's referral. I don't think that materially changes anything from the committee's perspective but wanted to flag that distinction in case we created any confusion. In case it's helpful to you, attached is the sample House Paid Internship Program payroll authorization form from the House's intranet

Please don't hesitate to reach out at any time before the extended deadline if you have any questions or want to talk through anything.

Best,
Brittney

****
Brittney Pescatore
Director of Investigations

Committee on Ethics
United States House of Representatives
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From: Member Counsel <[redacted]@lexpolitica.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 3:17 PM
To: Committee Counsel <[redacted]@mail.house.gov>; Member Counsel <[redacted]@lexpolitica.com>